

## IS IT TIME TO REWRITE THE CONSTITUTION?



Critics say its "medieval" separation of powers paralyzes government.

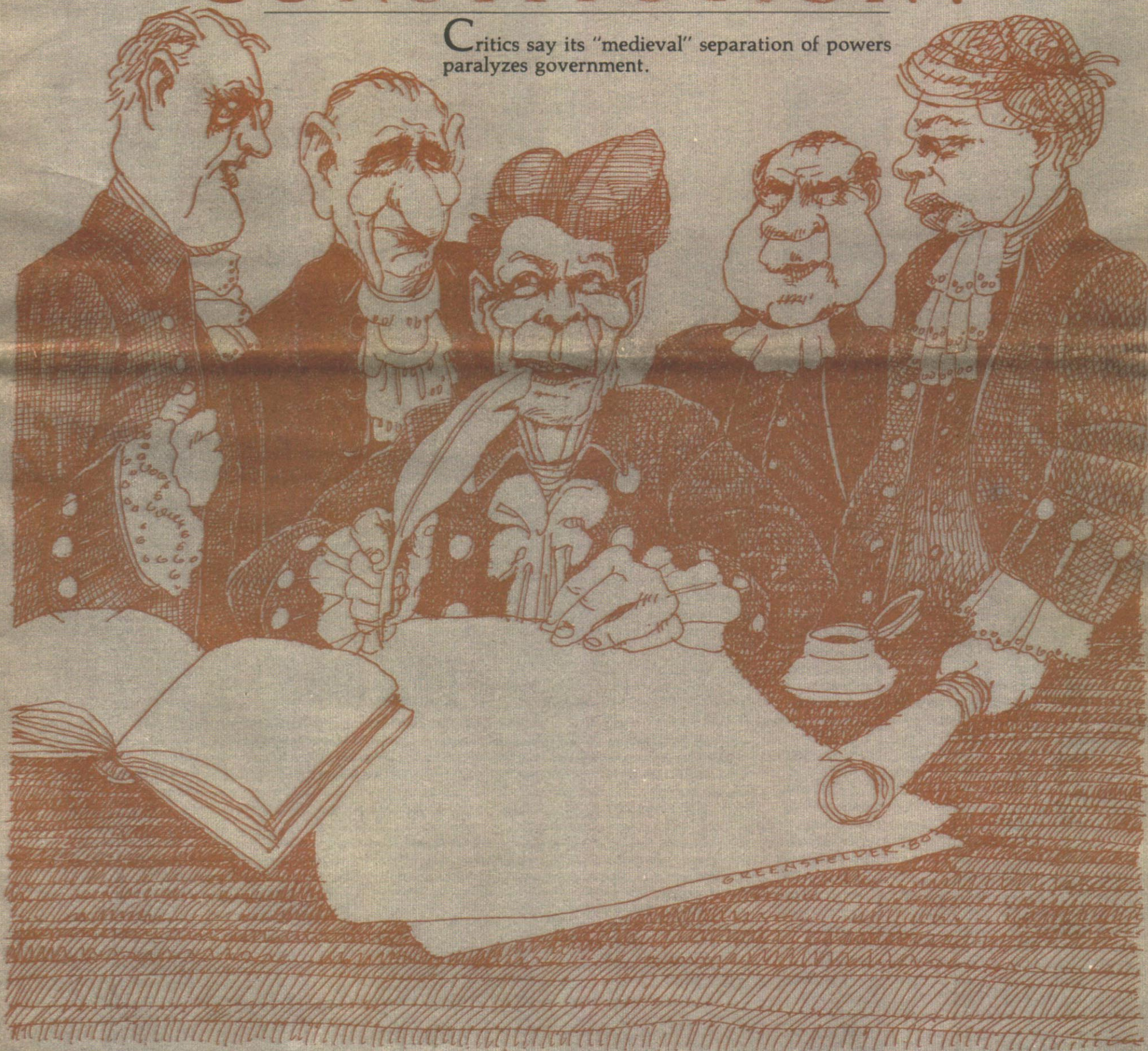
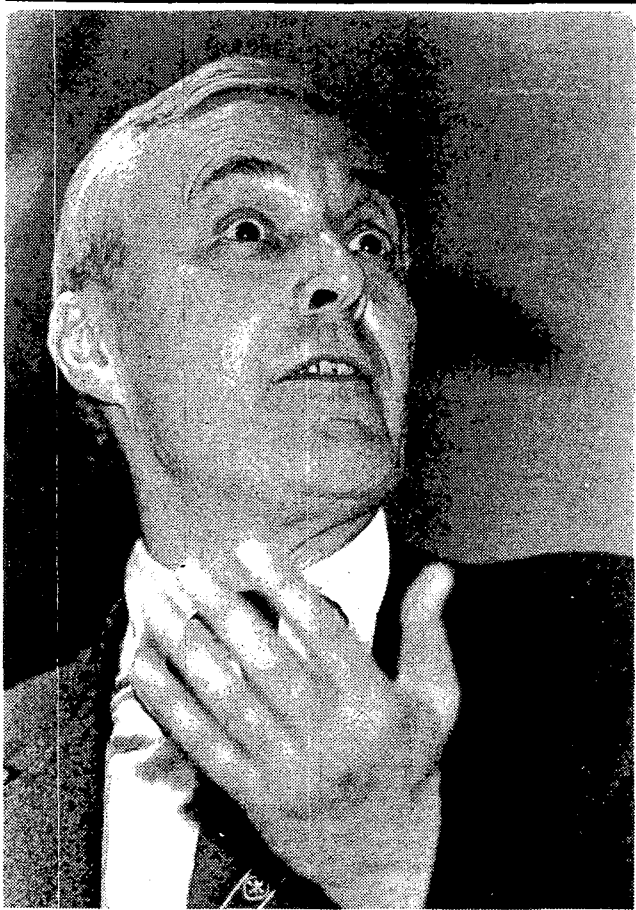


Illustration by Tom Greensfelder

PUBLIC TV  
DISCOVERS THE PROFIT MOTIVE  
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# THE INSIDE STORY



Lionel Delvingne/Picture Group

Even the failures admitted by British Labour leader Tony Benn and other European socialists looked like available victories to their American audience.

## Beyond the image of nuts and dilettantes

By David Moberg

WASHINGTON

"Socialists in this country are so often dismissed as either totalitarians or as nuts, marginal people or dilettantes," Michael Harrington gratefully told the assemblage of European dignitaries. "And you leaders of government and mass movements and workers' parties are living proof that that is not the case. We hope that your very presence here will help to change American society. This is a society that has a conservative right and a liberal center and no socialist left, and the entire society has suffered from the fact that one of the major options before modern human beings cannot even rationally be discussed here."

The leaders who came to Washington the weekend of Dec. 5-7 for a conference sponsored by Harrington's Institute for Democratic Socialism on "Eurocommunism and America"—including Willy Brandt of Germany, Francois Mitterrand of France, Tony Benn of Great Britain, Olof Palme of Sweden and Joop den Uyl of the Netherlands—were not there simply to educate and inspire an overflow crowd of more than 2,000 people. They had their own self-interest. After all, as Tony Benn noted, the U.S. president is also president of the "Western power system." If Reagan exacerbates a cold war, socialism is likely to suffer in the Western European countries. "Our new president has been elected," Benn said, "and we want to know what you're going to do about it."

The surprisingly large and attentive crowd included a wide age range of people—intellectuals and government staff, representatives from public policy organizations and unions, and many grass-roots activists. But there were few blacks, even fewer prominent U.S. politicians (Ron Dellums, the one-man socialist caucus in Congress, spoke but Senators Kennedy and McGovern only visited a private dinner), and only a smattering of union leaders, mainly from the Machinists. AFL-CIO president Lane Kirkland and his aides actively worked to discourage American and European union leaders and staff from attending, according to conference organizers. Perhaps a quarter of the group belonged to

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the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), whose leadership is the same as that of the Institute for Democratic Socialism.

The success of the conference is in part attributable to the general air of crisis. Not only is the world economy stagnating, giving rise to new tensions and fears within and between nations, but also there is a political crisis. The right-wing solutions are failing dreadfully in Britain under Thatcher and we may soon be their guinea pigs as well. But the liberal solutions aren't working, and that means a failure not only for the Democrats here but also for many of the socialist and social democratic parties invited to the conference.

### Beyond sweet failures.

Most of these leaders and their parties are, after all, out of office, in some cases after long terms in power. There was acknowledgement by some, such as den Uyl, that young people were turning away from their parties or that the administration of welfare capitalism by social democrats had its problems. But few were as explicit as Benn. "We failed," he said of the Labour governments, which he had participated in but criticized. His conclusion: "Labor, by which I mean the labor movement and the socialist analysis that it has given birth to, must deliberately go beyond the point where it seeks to administer a system that is fundamentally unjust in its operation."

But even the failures and limitations of European socialist parties in their administration of capitalism impressed many Americans. Mai-Britt Thorin, a member of the Swedish parliament, was very critical of the continued second-class status of women, who, she said, make only 89 cents for every \$1 a man makes. Americans in the audience thought they had misunderstood because of her accent or that she had made a dreadful error: it's 59 cents in the U.S. But the 89 cents she referred to as an injustice in Sweden would have seemed like sweet victory here.

Likewise, former prime minister Olof Palme described a few of the recent Swedish achievements: a union safety steward can stop production in any situation workers judge unsafe; there can be no unwarranted firings; workers must be on the boards of all firms; unions have the right to negotiate all issues of work organization and management and have a right to all information needed from the company. Still it is difficult to enforce these rights, and beyond that there is not sufficient worker or public control over investment. The social democrats and the labor movement in Sweden are pushing a plan to provide a wage-earner fund out of corporate profits that would, under collective worker control, eventually come to dominate the major businesses.

The theme of the socialist parties—as well as the focus of the conference—was the extension of democracy. The 1980s will be a "battle for democracy" in the East and West, north and south, Benn argued, and the current battles in El Salvador and Poland—as well as the western countries—confirm that. And, as Palme argued, "democracy is the heart of socialism." Consequently, the European socialists emphasized democratic control over the workplace, over new technology, over the mass media, over the planning of the economy, over the geographical location of employment, over the flow of trade between nations, and over the conversion of older industries. Though there were differences among the parties on the role of the market—with the Germans, the strongest capitalist economy in Europe, favoring greater reliance on it—most recognized that with the advent of large corporations and especially the multinationals, the market no longer operates as it used

to, let alone as it should in theory.

But none of the parties was ready to dismiss entirely the use of the market. And even though most called for increased public ownership, there was a recognition that private enterprises, especially small ones, would continue to operate in a socialist society. Also, the Europeans were increasingly committed to a maximum of decentralized decision-making, with central planning bodies mainly setting forth grand strategic goals, as British Labour MP Stuart Holland suggested, and leaving other decisions to workers and firms. The approach has its problems, balancing center and small unit, but the prevailing mood among the Europeans was that their socialism was not a blueprint for utopia—the zipless society but rather a way of very slowly working out, over a period of many decades, new means of popular control. Democracy recognizes the contradictions that arise from each individual extending his or her power and abilities to the utmost and tries to harmonize them rather than deny them, Mitterrand argued.

### Defending the welfare state.

At a time when American liberals are retreating from the welfare state, government spending and redistribution programs, the European socialists were adamant in their defense: "The only way to get out of a slump is to spend," Holland insisted, pointing out that stagnation and more than tariff barriers inhibited world trade through a deflationary "beggar-thy-neighbor" policy. Redistribution is key, not simply because less inequality of income is more just, but also because redistribution to the poorer nations and to the poor of industrialized countries would stimulate and democratize demand in the market, spur the sluggish world economy and reduce the threat of war. Democratization of the economy, including public ownership of roughly one-third of the major enterprises, also accounted for the low inflation and unemployment throughout most of the '70s in Austria, which is governed by social democrats, economist Egon Matzner claimed.

But socialism is not, if it is to survive its own European crises or to gain support here in the U.S., simply a set of superior techniques of managing society. It is a different way of life, in which, as Palme argued, rights to control over the workplace and firm flow as naturally from being a worker as rights to control over government flow from being a citizen. To capitalists who defend their rights to property as an inalienable pleasure, he asks, "If ownership is such a joy, why shouldn't the workers share in it?" And as Tony Benn argued, socialism must be rooted in both moral principle and in the long historical traditions of popular demands for equality and democracy, extending them, as Francois Mitterrand insisted, into new spaces—the critique of centralized state bureaucracy, the destruction of nature, the domination of new technologies.

The European socialists had their divisions that emerged only obliquely—over protectionism, the common market, or nuclear power, for example. More important, they all faced the immense power of the growing multinationals, and none of them had a persuasive program for confronting the problem.

### Bringing it back home.

But their problems are nothing compared to ours. The conference may stimulate thinking and enthusiasm enhance exchanges with Europe as well as a broader international sense of a socialist movement and encourage more socialists to come out of the closet ("Black is beautiful, Socialism is beautiful, too," Tony Benn

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IN THESE TIMES

# Lame ducks salvage superfund

By Gene Karpinski

WASHINGTON

**W**HEN MEMBERS OF CONGRESS returned to Washington for the lame-duck session on Nov. 12, all but the most faithful supporters believed that the "Superfund" bill to clean up hazardous chemical wastes would be one more victim of the election-day results. Republican Senator Howard Baker, soon to be the Senate majority leader, announced that he felt Congress would do a "better job" on the bill next year. The Chemical Manufacturers' Association, confident that they would get a bill more favorable to their interests under a new administration, even backed off of their apparent support for the pared-down measure that had passed the House in September. And an ominous headline in the Nov. 15 issue of *Congressional Quarterly* warned: "Superfund Cleanup Proposal Apparently Dead This Year."

But, like so many other predictions about what would happen in November of 1980, the proclaimed death of Superfund was inaccurate. On Nov. 24, the Senate passed, by an overwhelming 78 to 9 margin, a Superfund bill stronger than one that had cleared the House earlier. Nine days later the House, by a vote of 274 to 94, approved the Senate version, which the President signed on Dec. 11.

The concept of a Superfund was not new, but it took a few major catastrophes to compel Congress to act—notably Love Canal in New York, where over \$30 million has already been spent on emergency cleanup assistance. And government investigations quickly concluded that the spills making the front page were only the tip of the toxic iceberg. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that more than 2,000 dump sites pose a significant risk to human health and environment. The agency has studied 645 sites and concluded that they threaten the health of over 1.2 million people.

The additional reports released in August helped to ensure that the bill remain a high priority for Congress. A Library of Congress study warned that the 43,000 chemicals currently in commercial use are "so long-lasting and pervasive in the environment that virtually the entire human population of the nation, and indeed the world, carries some body burden of one or several of them." At the same time a



*Workers sample contents of abandoned storage drums in Hammond, Indiana.*

Surgeon General's report noted that toxic chemicals are "a major and growing health problem... [that] will become more manifest in the years ahead," and conceded that "through this decade we will have to confront a series of environmental emergencies."

The bill that finally was signed into law was much weaker than the original Senate Superfund legislation, S.1480. The fund was cut from \$4.1 billion to \$1.6 billion, and provisions of the original bill that gave victims greater legal rights and compensated them for medical expenses and lost wages, were deleted. But because of threatened filibusters from senators

like Jesse Helms (R-NC), concessions were made in order to pass a bill this year. As Senator Robert Stafford (R-VT), a chief proponent of the stronger original measure, admitted: "I am a realist.... At this time and in this place S.1480 cannot be enacted. And this compromise can."

But Senator George Mitchell (D-ME) eloquently warned his fellow senators that this bill was only a modest first step. Stressing that the bill was deficient because it provided for cleanup, and some compensation for property damage, but did not compensate victims, Mitchell castigated the Senate for "having made the judgment that property is more impor-

tant than persons." He and several other key supporters vowed to come back next year to strengthen the legislation.

As passed, the Superfund bill creates a \$1.6 billion fund to clean up toxic chemical waste dumps and chemical spills. Eighty-six percent of the financing (\$1.38 billion) will come from taxes on the chemical industry, with the rest from general revenues. The bill also provides a strong liability framework so that government, once it has cleaned up a site, can sue to recover its costs from those responsible, thereby replenishing the fund.

Despite the bill's limitations, environmental and citizen groups such as Congress Watch, Environmental Action and the Sierra Club supported it as the best measure that could pass Congress in this session.

The chemical industry, unanimously and aggressively opposed to the original Senate bill, was split in its position on the final compromise. Several individual companies, led by DuPont, endorsed it, but the Chemical Manufacturers Association (CMA), the chief industry lobbying group, refused to sign on. A CMA spokesperson complained that the bill "establishes an unfortunate precedent, the inflationary off-budget financing, and an unnecessary new federal bureaucracy."

Despite this opposition, and despite the fact that the bill had been pronounced dead several times, the Superfund survived. The persistence of senators such as Stafford of Vermont, Bradley of New Jersey, and Randolph of West Virginia, with the strong backing of Representatives like Florio of New Jersey and Gore of Tennessee, kept the measure alive. But ultimately, it is the thousands of citizens around the country who let their elected representatives know that they wanted a cleanup bill this year that deserve the credit.

Gene Karpinski is a staff attorney for Public Citizen's Congress Watch, a consumer advocacy group started by Ralph Nader.

## New interest in a labor party

By Mike Berkowitz

LOS ANGELES

**O**N DEC. 5, THE CALIFORNIA Labor Federation, which represents some 1.8 million workers in AFL-CIO affiliated unions, met in Los Angeles for a "political review conference." It was only the second time that the Federation has called such a conference—and the first statewide labor gathering since the November presidential elections. The conference was devoted entirely to one topic: Labor, the Minorities and the Two-Party System.

California AFL-CIO's state executive board had set up the conference at the urging of state secretary John Henning. "There are signs American labor may be entering a decade of historic political change," Henning had noted in his 1979 Labor Day message. "American labor in the coming year should—through its vehicles of education—study and measure the Labor Party experiences of other

democratic nations. Our blind acceptance of external political authority finds us beggars at the table of national abundance. We deserve better than that."

But little "blind acceptance" was evident on the conference floor in Los Angeles. Dozens of rank-and-file representatives paraded to the microphone to express their thoughts on the growth of the Ku Klux Klan, new attacks on affirmative action and the failures of the Democratic Party. And overwhelmingly they called for the formation of an independent labor party as the next step for organized labor.

But the view from the platform was quite different. Leadoff speaker John Joyce, president of the Bricklayers International, expressed his disappointment with the out-going president: "Carter was a big burden on the Democratic ticket," he said. "There was no way we could get our people to come out in numbers for Carter." But the lesson for Joyce was simply that unions must work harder within the existing parties. "Unions just have not been serious about political activity," he said. "We must get people

registered, get people to vote. Our strength lies in the locals; we must activate them. It's just a case of doing it."

Similarly, both Virna Canson, NAA-CP regional director, and Mario Obledo, head of California's Health and Welfare Agency, made strong cases for continued affirmative action for minorities and acknowledged the numerous failures of the major parties, yet neither suggested alternatives to the two-party system. Canson criticized the founding of the new National Black Independent Political Party and thought that minorities fed up with the dismal record of the Democrats should look toward sympathetic Republicans.

Yet almost all of the 200 rank-and-file representatives at the conference spoke against the solutions posed by the scheduled speakers. Most could find little to choose between Democrats and Republicans. "Labor has given too much money to the Democrats," charged Steve Zeltser from Operating Engineers Local 39, San Francisco. "Democrats are the party of big business, just like the Republicans."

*Continued on page 10*



# IN SHORT

## Ad nauseam

"I used to feel guilty serving white bread," admits the concerned mother, "til I saw U.S. Department of Agriculture figures on enriched bread." Cut to a graphic of bread slices accompanied by a chart of selected nutritional figures, while the mother's voiceover intones: "I found Wonder has virtually the same amount of the most significant nutrients found in 100 percent whole wheat. Imagine...nutrition whole wheat can't beat."

Imagine...a TV ad that the Continental Baking Company pulled off the air Oct. 17, according to *Nutrition Action*, three days after the Center for Science in the Public Interest filed a formal complaint with the Federal Trade Commission. "The producers of the commercial chose to show only the handful of nutrients in which white bread compares favorably with whole wheat," charged CSPI's Michael Jacobson. Past gimmicks employed by the same huge baking company, he said, have included putting sawdust in "Fresh Horizons" bread to increase the fiber content and slicing its "Profile" bread extra thin to reduce the amount of calories per slice.

## Give and take

Nobody's going to dump any more waste on General Electric's Morris nuclear facility in Illinois, but the company isn't pleased. In fact, says Darlene Gramigna of Morris Alert, the nuclear industry is likely to challenge the constitutionality of Illinois' new "Joyce Amendment," which lays down this rule: Illinois will accept radioactive waste only from states that take waste from Illinois.

The amendment is not only aimed at Wisconsin, Connecticut and California—the three current sources of Morris' radioactive refuse. The Illinois senate members who voted Dec. 3 to override Governor James R. Thompson's veto of the ban were also out to block any future attempts to put their state at the disposal, so to speak, of 21 other states by making Morris a federal dump site.

## Practice," he replied

When leftist lawyer Zolton Ferency won a seat on the Ingham County Commission in an East Lansing, Mich., district that Reagan carried—and where the incumbent was a Republican—the *Detroit Free Press* proclaimed, "Bang the drums, clash the cymbals and kill the fatted calf!" The excited and astonished tone was due not to Ferency's post as president of *In These Times*' Publishers Associates, but rather to the persistence that brought him his first electoral victory after seven defeats over the last 20 years.

## Drop it

The Wilmington 10, whose 1972 convictions were finally reversed Dec. 4 in the U.S. Court of Appeals, now await a decision by federal district judge Franklin T. Dupree on whether to call for a new trial or just drop the case. The three-judge appeals panel ruled unanimously that the Rev. Ben Chavis and nine other civil rights activists had been denied their constitutional right to a fair trial when their attorneys were not given full access to the testimony of the key state witness, who perjured himself.

## Bugs in the system?

This query from an activist author just arrived in the mail:

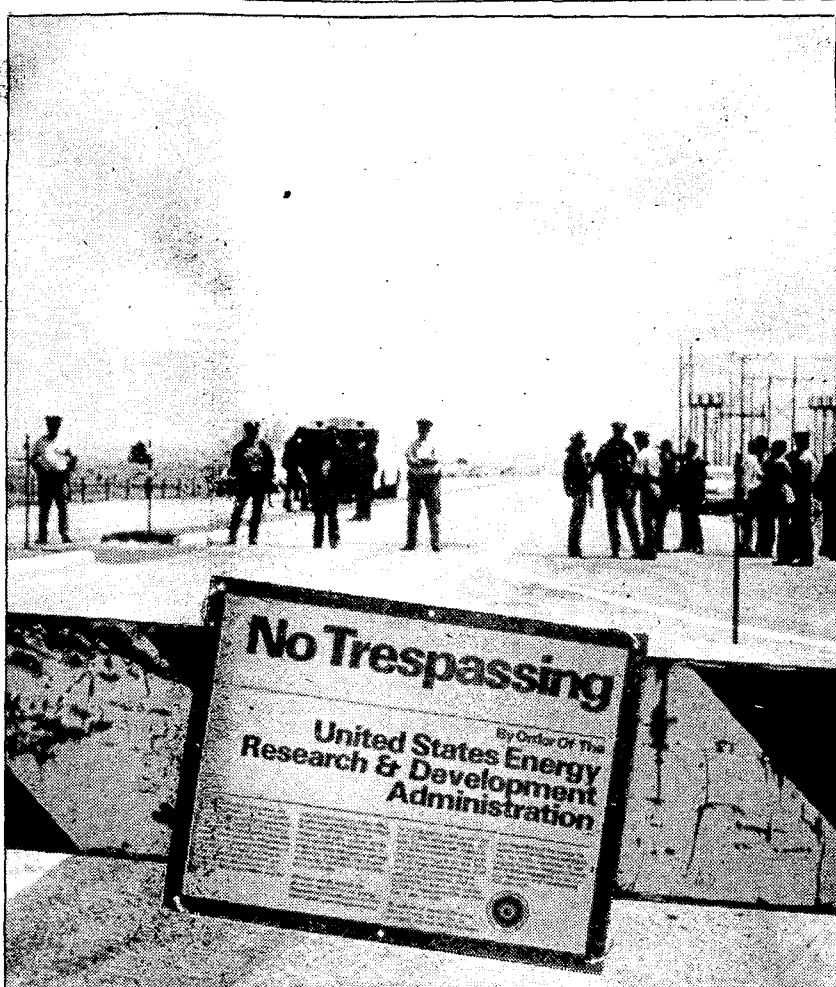
"On the day before the Women's Pentagon Action ['In Short,' Nov. 26], the New York office phones got funny. While some people got through, many who called about bus rides to the demonstration got a recorded message saying '242-3270 has been disconnected.' The same thing happened to the phone at the Boston Alliance Against Registration and the Draft on the day of a sit-in last May. In both cases the phones were working the day before and working again the day after. The phone company couldn't understand it. Have you had any problems like this? Please send information to Barbara Garson, 463 West St., Apt. 1108A, NY, NY 10014."

## And now the good news

"In Event of a Nuclear Attack, Life Could Go On Under New Mexico State University," ran the headline for an article in the *Albuquerque Journal*.

Lenny Perlman, who submitted this item to "In Short," c/o *In These Times*, will receive an instant sense of gratification—which should encourage other readers to do likewise.

—Josh Kornbluth



On April 29, 1979, protestors were unwelcome as usual at the Rocky Flats plutonium fabrication plant, near Denver.

## Activists call for debate on plutonium increase

In mid-September, an elite group of White House staff and advisors, including members of the National Security Council, presented President Carter their recommendations for "special nuclear materials production" over the next decade or more. Based on plans to build more than 9,500 additional warheads for the U.S. nuclear arsenal as the MX, Trident and cruise missiles are deployed, they recommended a program of vastly increased plutonium and tritium production. Those two highly radioactive elements are key components of a thermonuclear bomb. And according to both the Department of Energy and Department of Defense, we are about to experience a "shortfall" that could "force undesirable tradeoffs in the nuclear weapons program," to quote Armed Services Committee member Sen. Henry Jackson.

Spurred by news leaks about the decision to expand plutonium production and related reports of a \$1 billion crash program to modify and expand the entire DOE weapons complex, a number of peace and environmental groups recently moved to force a public debate on the issue. In November, the American Friends Service Committee, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and Natural Resources Defense Council filed a request that DOE prepare a system-wide Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the effects of expanded weapons production nationwide as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969. DOE must "assess the risks to the environment and to public health and safety, and pose alternatives to the proposed action," the groups stated in a letter to Energy Secretary Charles Duncan.

Resumption of large-scale plutonium production and reprocessing for the first time since the 1960s would result in increased shipments of radioactive materials to and from weapons plants, increases in "routine emissions" and releases of radioactive effluents, higher levels of wastes generated by plutonium

production and fabrication, and other hazards in areas where major weapons plants are located. These include production and waste storage facilities in Colorado (Rocky Flats), Texas (Pantex), California (Lawrence Livermore), Tennessee (Oak Ridge), Kentucky (Padukah), Idaho (National Engineering Lab), Washington (Hanford) and South Carolina (Savannah River).

In Colorado, Governor Richard Lamm reacted to DOE's plans by calling on Senator Gary Hart, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, to oppose any decision that would lead to the expansion of the Rocky Flats plutonium fabrication plant, which has long been a target of anti-nuclear opposition in the state.

The DOE has yet to respond to the request for an EIS, which would be the first such evaluation of the entire weapons program ever to be prepared. Speaking in support of the request, a number of prominent scientists have echoed the concerns of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) over the implications for nonproliferation of a major plutonium increase. Dr. George Rathjens of MIT said, "We've got so much, we don't know what to do with it," and suggested as an alternative that obsolete warheads could be recycled at a greater rate.

This has also been the option favored by some ACDA officials, who had hoped that the U.S. would propose a cutoff in the production of fissionable materials as a disarmament initiative at the United Nations special session two years ago. But support for the proposal within the Carter administration was torpedoed by objections from the Pentagon and the National Security Council.

Debate within the Congress on the issue—now taking place behind closed doors, in a lead-lined room formerly used by the Atomic Energy Commission—has focused on a so-called "plutonium gap." But at one hearing, Duane Sewell, DOE

undersecretary for defense programs, maintained that current plutonium stockpile levels were sufficient and no increase was needed.

Later testimony by DOE officials referred to the need to "preserve options" for the mid- and late-'80s, when they expect the requirements for special nuclear materials to "harden." These options include starting up the nuclear reactor at Hanford in Washington state (originally built to manufacture plutonium for the Nagasaki bomb); operating at full capacity two reactors at Savannah River now on standby; and building at least one entirely new production complex.

The Senate and House armed services committees, in their budget requests for fiscal year 1981, called for adequate funding to enable the president to choose any or all three of these options. The appropriations committee, however, allocated funds this year only for the conversion of the nuclear reactor at Hanford and startup of the PUREX extraction facility. Undoubtedly the new Reagan administration will seek additional funds in the budget requests for fiscal 1982.

Meanwhile, opposition to an expected doubling of the DOE weapons budget to \$25 billion over the next five years continues to build. Citizens groups in many of the states that would be directly affected are working together to develop legal, educational and political strategies to block the next escalation of the arms race. The NRDC, AFSC and FOR have notified the government of their intention to sue in federal court should their requests for an EIS be denied.

—Mike Jendrzeczyk and Pam Solo

## Weatherpersons resurface

After 11 years underground, and a spell on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted list, Bernadine Dohrn is unrepentant. "I remain committed to the struggle ahead," she said, reading from a prepared statement after her Dec. 3 surrender in Chicago. "The nature of the system has not changed." Dohrn, a leader of the Weather Underground in the late '60s, will now face charges resulting from the 1969 "Days of Rage" demonstrations here.

She is currently charged in Cook County with aggravated battery, mob action, resisting police, obstructing a police officer and jumping bail.

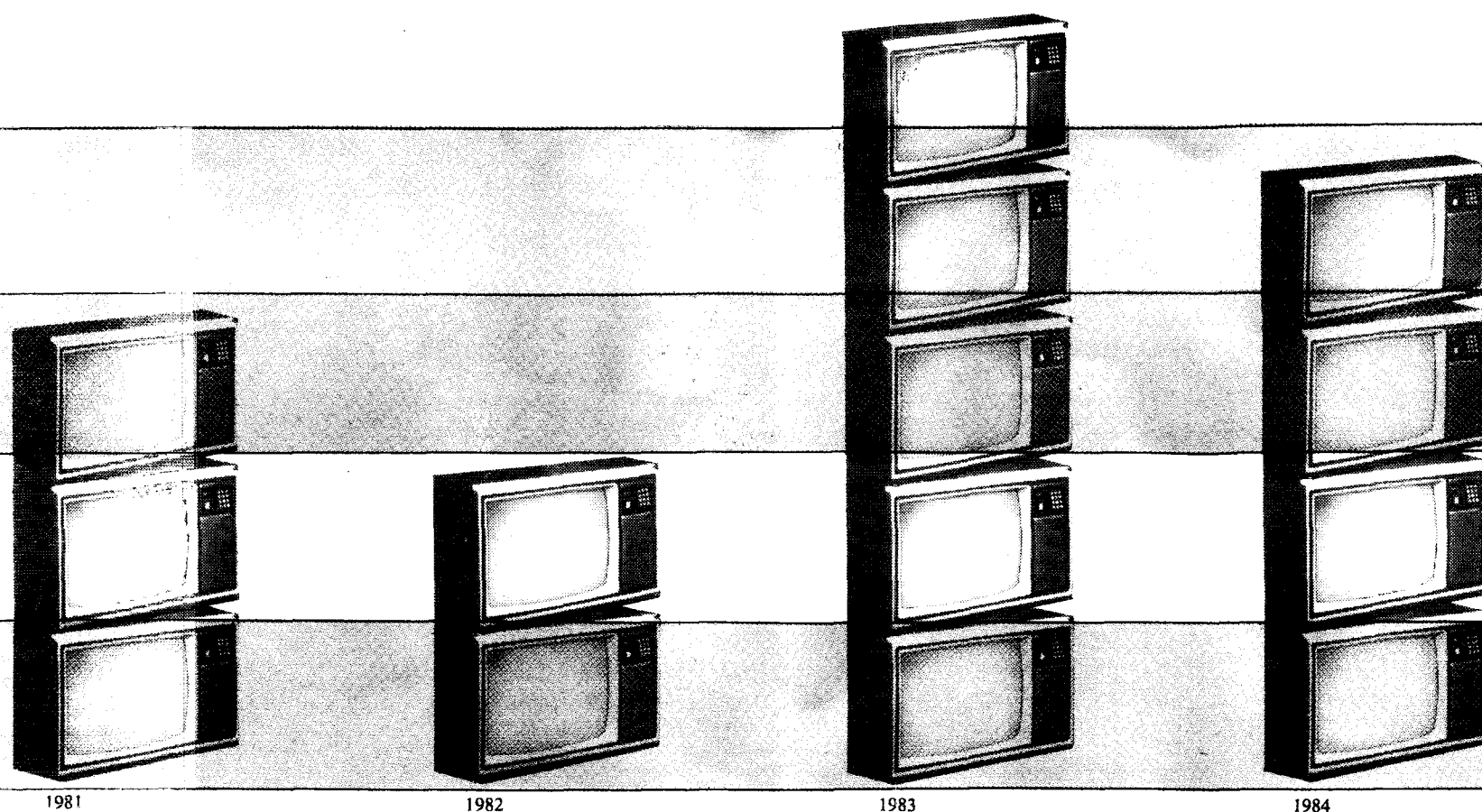
Dohrn was accompanied by William Ayers, with whom she has had two children during her years underground. Though all federal charges against Ayers (and some against Dohrn) were dropped because they resulted from illegal electronic eavesdropping, Ayers did not surface until now "because I was living with Bernadine."

The probability that the state will prove its case against Dohrn is "very small," says Michael Kennedy, her attorney. On the other hand, a prosecutor said the county has film coverage and 20 witnesses of Dohrn kicking a police officer in the groin. The case will be tried under Judge Fred Suria, who has presided over past trials of "Days of Rage" defendants. Suria released Dohrn on \$25,000 bail and set a court date of Jan. 13. Newly-elected State's Attorney Richard M. Daley (son of the late mayor) said that no plea bargaining negotiations took place before Dohrn's recent surrender.

—Laurel Van Driest



# IN THE NATION



## BROADCASTING

# The new business of PBS is business

By Pat Aufderheide

**T**HE FUTURE OF PUBLIC TV IS flickering. Baset with budgetary crises, PBS stations are spinning off for-profit businesses to pay their way through the '80s.

This trend, like the public TV system itself, is a hybrid. It's not quite free enterprise, nor is it a government project. It's free enterprise with all the risks—but with our money. Unlike either constituents or stockholders, we get no say in the running of for-profit businesses by public and non-profit stations, nor do we have any say in how the money so generated is used.

And yet the public funds public TV, both directly and indirectly. Seventy to 80 percent of a public station's money comes from the public—through taxes and through tax breaks for corporate and individual donors, as well as grants. This is the venture capital with which stations then start new businesses. Those businesses have no necessary relation to the public interest; nor do their profits have to return to any particular area of public TV's operations.

### History.

Commercialization is the latest attempt to contain economic crisis in public TV. The first steps were simple economy measures. Cuts were made in staff and programs—especially those with the least to appeal to “upscale,” likely-to-donate viewers (the same viewers who attract corporate and corporate foundation donors).

News and public affairs were prime targets. Even before San Francisco's KQED dropped its news program this September, WGBH (Boston) did away with a third of its news staff over the summer. Neither WNET nor PBS offered Bill Moyers or Robert MacNeil election coverage (they went to commercial networks).

Smaller stations have resorted to the Interregional Program Service, where they can buy programs cheaply without going through PBS bureaucracy. That way, the usually-conservative station manager can buy “Moments of Championship Skating” and movie musical

packages without worry about any social programming requirements.

Priorities have been rearranged to emphasize upscale programs. PBS developed three programming tiers, with budgets to match: “prime-time” features, allocated 60 percent of programming monies; “educational” (24 percent); and “special interest” (16 percent). This way the question of how important public affairs are, or whether black people's interests are “special” is already, to some extent, determined.

### Business.

The long-range solution, though, is to look for profitable businesses.

Renting hardware is one option—especially if the hardware is not being used for low-profit and “special interest” program production. On July 1 PBS began sharing its satellite time with Western Union. A private ad company uses it to transmit commercials to PBS stations (the great majority either have or want such contracts), which then record them and send them across town to commercial stations. WNET presently leases its tape-duplication facility in Ann Arbor.

PBS “software”—programs—can also be sold on videocassette, disc and on cable, though it's not clear whether or not this may undercut the current public TV audience. In early November WGBH arranged to sell programs from its inventory to a new syndication company, whose chair is also president of WGBH. WNET is also clearing rights to its programs, to sell to an in-house syndicator, and KQED also plans syndication. WNET already has a for-profit syndication service in Chicago, which handles, among other things, Paul Harvey's commentaries.

Public facilities can even produce commercial programs. WNET presently produces classical music concerts for Bravo paycable. WGBH plans to produce, for its syndication company, documentaries tied to *U.S. News and World Report*. The grandest commercial production project is the one recommended by the Carnegie Commission—a line of cultural programs such as opera, concerts and plays. (A similar ABC-Warner deal is making executives nervous, however.)

WETA (Washington, D.C.) and KCET (Los Angeles) are looking into teletext transmission, and PBS already offers teleconferencing (attend your convention at home via your TV set). PBS president Larry Grossman is urging stations to look into the cable franchise business.

Finally, there is the selling of the membership list. *The Dial* magazine offers its advertisers readers with expensive taste. Further, PBS has finally decided that corporate sponsors may display their corporate logos on the air—one step away from out-and-out commercials.

But most of the new projects attempt to exploit new technologies.

For many this puts the cart before the horse. John Rice of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers said, “Everyone is dazzled by the new technology. Nobody is talking about the programming, the priorities, the goals of public TV. That should be clear before they take off with new hardware.”

The selling of services and products, and the new business spinoffs, could be used to underwrite public interest material that doesn't garner an upscale audience.

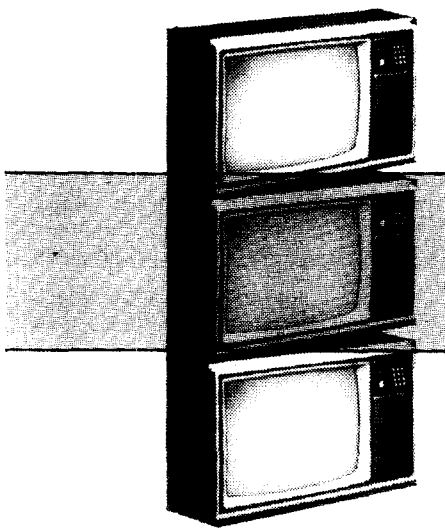
The decision is not only a matter of the good heart of station execs. It also depends on their ability to make an informed opinion without any public accountability.

Who is the public? WTTW (Chicago) was a pioneer in commercial funding gambits and today relies very little on federal grants. When asked about the station's accountability, a station spokesman said that audience response was the best measure of whether or not the station fulfilled its purpose as an alternative to commercial TV. Similarly, KQED president Anthony Tiano suggested how programming priorities are established at KQED. They are, he said, “reviewed and measured on the basis of our perception of the psychological and spiritual needs of our audience.”

At both stations a small staff decides what the viewership wants and then gives viewers a yes-or-no option. Worse, they equate “audience” with “public.” This, TV analyst Les Brown pointed out last year in the *New York Times*, is typical of broadcasters and is the source of their

*Continued on page 22*

## Issue is joined at KQED



in 1977, when KQED had closed down its second TV station for lack of funds. Now KQED is turning that second station into a subscription TV service for pay movies. At the same time KQED cut the last of its news programming, a cut that also swept many minority staffers out the door. Cut as well are foreign language programs, ethnic programs and public affairs.

The subscription TV angle is just the latest of KQED's business gambits. It already has an advertising agency, Raytel. And plans are being made to produce a weekly videocassette magazine, to offer teleconferencing, to sell videocassettes and discs, and to market its programs to cable TV.

KQED is just beginning its life as a mini-conglomerate. Station president Anthony Tiano recently assured his board of directors that he will spend most of his time in the coming year on for-profit enterprises.

“We've got to do this to stay alive,” KQED's spokesman Dick Robertson said to *In These Times*. “If the station is dark how much good do we do the public?” He argues that commercial ventures are not money losing but money gaining, and that financial health benefits everyone.

But in KQED's case, money generated

*Continued on page 22*





# RECONSTITUTING POWER IN AMERICA

Ronald Reagan's advisors have publicly deplored "the moralistic restrictions on presidential power" enacted by Congress in the Nixon years.

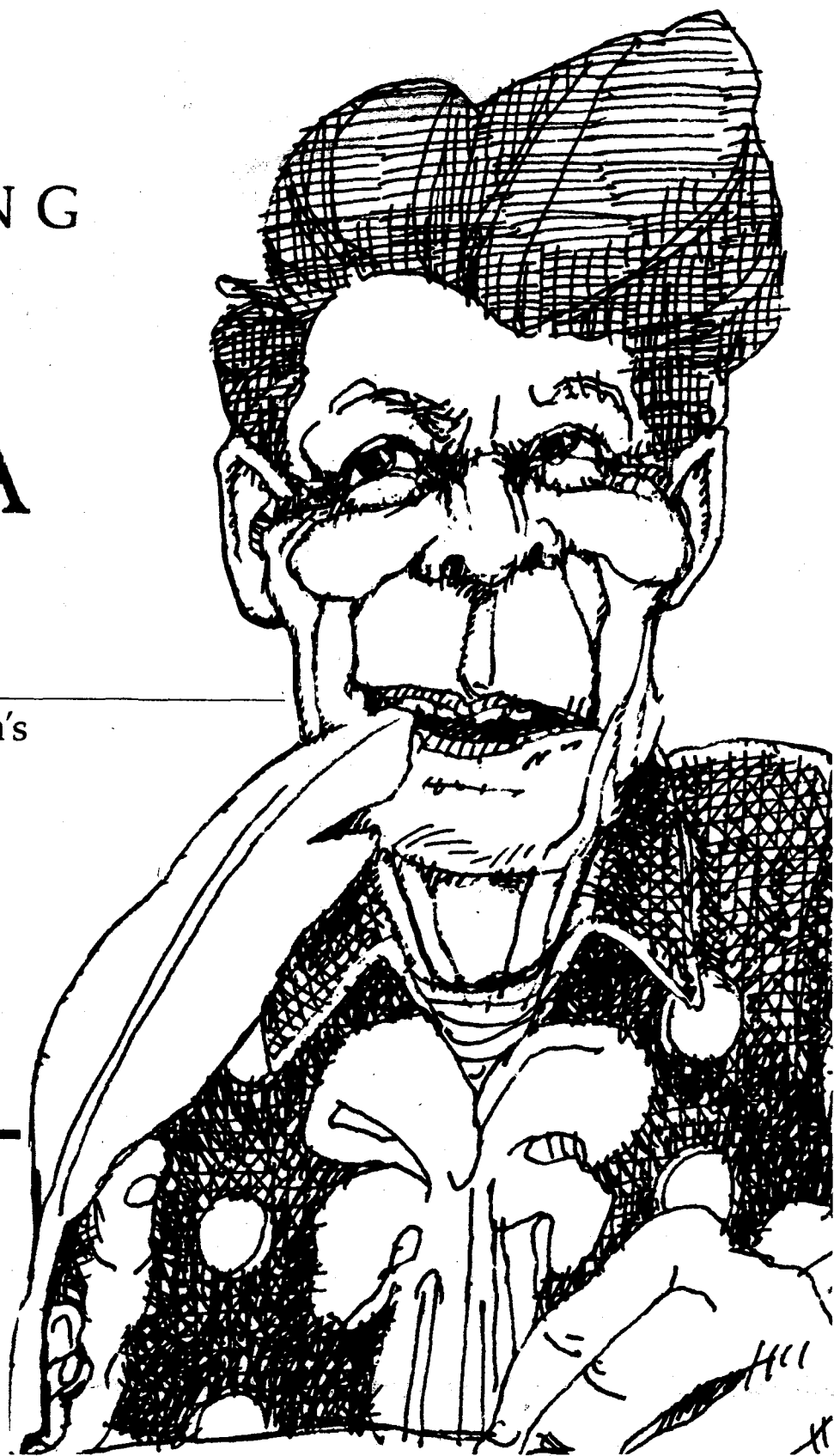
BY JOHN JUDIS

**I**N MOST CIVICS CLASSES, THE AMERICAN Constitution is approached with either reverence or yawns—depending often on whether one is teacher or student. In political and judicial debate, it continues to serve as a final arbiter. But within the political establishment—the lawyers, investment bankers, professors and public officials who periodically run and advise the government—the Constitution has become a controversial document. Increasingly, it is seen as an obsolete vehicle, much like the Model T, that cannot possibly convey its riders across the heavily trafficked, fast-moving highways of the contemporary world.

The current debate over the Constitution began during Watergate, an event that threw into question the historic relations between the president and Congress. It temporarily climaxed in 1975 with the publication of the Trilateral Commission's report on the governabil-

ity of democracies. The author of the section on the U.S., Harvard political scientist Samuel P. Huntington, had argued in a 1968 book that the American Constitution was a "late medieval" or "Tudor" document that made strong, efficient government impossible. In the Trilateral Commission report, Huntington argued that the U.S. was plagued by an "excess of democracy," manifested most clearly in the subordination of the presidency to Congress, special interest groups and the media. According to Huntington, "the decline in presidential power had to be reversed."

The debate subsided with the election of Jimmy Carter and a "veto-proof" Democratic Congress, but with the persistence of political stalemate between the president and Congress, it has recommenced in full force. In this fall's *Foreign Affairs*, Carter's counsel, Lloyd N. Cutler, blames the paralysis of government on the separation of powers decreed by the Constitution and proposes Constitutional reforms that would tie Congress' fate more closely to that of the president.



In the Brookings Institution's *Setting National Priorities: Agenda for the 1980s*, political scientist James L. Sundquist, a former official in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, argues that the "crisis of confidence" in the American government is related to a "crisis of competence" within the government. Like Cutler, Sundquist lays much of the blame on the separation of powers between Congress and the president.

In a Special Supplement to the *Washington Quarterly*—the theoretical journal of Ronald Reagan's principal thinktank, the Georgetown University Center for

Strategic and International Studies—David M. Abshire has organized a symposium on "U.S. Global Leadership; the President and Congress." The symposium participants are weighted toward, but not limited to, the right wing. While former Ford-Nixon aides Alexander Haig, Brent Scowcroft and Richard Cheney defend presidential prerogatives against Congress, political scientist Walter Dean Burnham warns against a new "war capitalism," led by a new imperial president. Burnham's essay on "The American Political Crisis" is particularly interesting because he accepts Huntington's analysis of the U.S. as a "Tudor polity," but uses it to warn against an excess of authoritarianism rather than democracy.

Not all the current critics of the Constitution argue for specific Constitutional amendments. Because of the recent "new right" drive for a Constitutional Convention to prohibit abortion and deficit spending, there is considerable reluctance among liberals and traditional conservatives to advocate new amendments. But the Constitutional structure of American government is nevertheless clearly at stake.

The premise that unites left and right, liberals and conservatives, is that any serious change in the *substance* of government, which all sides see as necessary, now requires a corresponding change in the *form* of government. And that is what the current debate over the Constitution is all about.

## Tudor America.

Three significantly different questions can be asked about the original Constitution. First, what did its framers say they intended? Second, what did they really intend? And third, what did the document actually accomplish? The typical interpretation of the Constitution has equated an answer to the first question, usually derived from a reading of the *Federalist Papers*, with an answer to the second and third.



Illustration by Tom Greensfelder

**F**ranklin Roosevelt expanded the domestic functions of the White House by creating the Office of the President—a mysterious bureaucratic space not subject to congressional inquiry.



As Gordon Wood laboriously and brilliantly demonstrated in *The Creation of the American Republic*, "the Constitution was intrinsically an aristocratic document designed to check the democratic tendencies of the period." Its framers' conception of a four-year president, chosen by Electors, "squints toward monarchy," anti-Federalists correctly observed, while its conception of Senators, to be elected by state legislatures to six-year terms, "has a strong tendency toward aristocracy."

The creation of a Senate and president were intended to "check the impudence of democracy," according to Alexander Hamilton, who initially wanted the president and Senate chosen for life terms. This impudence was embodied in the state legislatures and in the popularly elected House of Representatives. Hamilton, James Madison, James Wilson and other Federalists trotted in Monteciquen's checks and balances, along with the incoherent doctrine of popular sovereignty ("sovereignty" had always been identified with a sovereign institution), in order to provide a democratic gloss to their aristocratic endeavors.

The framers' purpose was both social and political. By ensuring the rule of the "better kind of people" within a government capable of subordinating state to national purposes, the Federalists thought they would be creating, in John Jay's words, a "strong government ably administered." While they publicly denied it, they were willing to sacrifice the liberty of the revolution for the power of the Constitution.

But the Constitution did not necessarily accomplish what its authors intended or what they said they intended. It neither ensured a strong government, ably administered or, in the promise of the *Federalist Papers*, diffused factional conflicts within the broader scope of national politics. The development of a popular party system in the Jacksonian era made the role of the presidential electors a mere formality. The parties also provided Congress with new-found power over the president. George Washington was probably the country's first and last elected monarch.

The Constitutional structure tended to break down in the presence of sharp internal conflict or threats from abroad. It barely survived the War of 1812; it was largely abandoned during the Civil War; and it was periodically ignored during the recent Vietnam War. It also came into question during the Great Depression and during the current economic doldrums.

Huntington, in *Political Order in Changing Societies*, traces this inadequacy back to the Constitution itself. While the authors intended a highly energetic, efficient state, they ended up willy-nilly with a system modelled upon earlier colonial governments, which had in turn been modelled on the government of Tudor England. The 16th-century English state still bore the imprint of the feudal era. Functions were replicated and power was diffused among the major governmental institutions. It would take the Glorious Revolution to turn England into a modern capitalist state in which governmental functions were sharply differentiated among institutions and power or sovereignty was concentrated in one institution—the House of Commons.

In seeking to check the power of the House of Representatives, the Federalists diffused governmental power among it, the Senate, the presidency, the judiciary. They also encouraged a situation in which legislative and executive functions were replicated among the different institutions. (This has reached an absurdity today with the joint presidential and congressional budgetary process.) In this way, they ended up with a late medieval rather than a modern state.

According to Burnham, the survival of this "antique political structure" depended on two conditions: successful self-regulation by American private enterprise and the isolation of the U.S. from overseas conflict. Burnham dates the obsolescence of the Constitution from the Great Depression and the Nazi invasion of France. But one could probably trace its obsolescence back to the 1893 depression

## Richard Nixon's impoundment of funds for political rather than purely budgetary reasons was in effect a legislative veto that could not be overridden—and an irate Congress retaliated.

and the Spanish-American War.

Beginning with Woodrow Wilson, American presidents have tried to bend the Constitution to fit the domestic priorities of federally-regulated corporate capitalism and the international priorities of overseas corporate expansion. Wilson, who was himself a critic of the separation of powers, shifted the focus of government from Congress to the president.

Wilson was the first president since Thomas Jefferson to address Congress with a program of his own. In the wake of his presidency, Congress passed the Budget and Accounting Act, which made the Treasury Department's Bureau of the Budget responsible for presenting Congress with an annual budget proposal.

Wilson also sponsored new federal and quasi-federal agencies like the Federal Trade Commission and the Federal Reserve Board, which took the determination of policy out of Congress' hands. The Federal Reserve, run by presidential and private appointees, has become a principal agent of government economic policy.

The domestic functions of the president were again enlarged by Franklin D. Roosevelt, who created the Office of the President, a mysterious bureaucratic space that came to house the Bureau of the Budget as well as the national security apparatus. Its denizens were not subject to congressional confirmation or inquiry.

After World War II, the president's foreign policy functions vastly increased at the expense of Congress, with the creation of the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Council and a host of new federal agencies. By the Vietnam war, the machinery was in place for conducting a war largely outside Congress' purview.

### Nixon and Carter.

If Watergate was the catalyst for the current Constitutional crisis, the Vietnam war provided the basic combustibles. Both Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon waged it without a congressional declaration of war. While Johnson and Nixon used the flimsy pretext of the Tonkin Gulf resolution, which authorized military action to protect American armed forces, Nixon pursued the war even after the resolution was repealed, and, while it was still in force, expanded the war to a supposedly neutral country—Cambodia—where no American forces had previously been stationed.

Nixon also used his executive power to impound funds that Congress had voted. While previous presidents had exercised this prerogative for budgetary reasons, Nixon's motives seemed more political: to block programs that he disapproved of. Nixon's impoundment was, in effect, a legislative veto that could not be overridden.

The bitter rivalry between Nixon and Congress fueled Watergate. It led Congress, which ordinarily would have been more cautious about challenging presidential powers, to go after Nixon for what was initially a simple example of election-year hi-jinks, the Watergate burglary. In the midst of Watergate, Congress passed the War Powers Act and the



Budget Control and Impoundment Act—measures that were designed to curb Nixon's unconstitutional excesses.

By the time Nixon resigned even his most ardent supporters had deserted his cause. But supporters and opponents of Nixon's policies prior to Watergate derived widely different Constitutional lessons from Nixon's experience. Liberal opponents of Nixon saw Watergate as confirming their doubts about what Arthur Schlesinger Jr. called the "imperial presidency." After Watergate, they advocated not only measures to curb presiden-

## Jimmy Carter's presidency exemplified Tudor government. Even with a veto-proof Congress he failed to enact his major programs, which suggested that the problem was not partisan politics, but constitutional structure.

But the experience of the Carter administration lent a peculiar twist to these arguments. Unlike Nixon and Gerald Ford, Carter had a veto-proof Democratic majority in Congress. Yet he failed to enact his major proposals for tax reform, energy price regulation, welfare reform and labor law reform. The Carter experience seemed to demonstrate that the problem was not simply partisan politics—liberals vs. conservatives—but Constitutional structure. Congress and the president during Carter's tenure were Huntington's Tudor polity *par excellence*.

### Imperial government.

Lloyd Cutler has probably experienced the current stalemate as deeply as anyone—last summer, Carter entrusted him with shepherding SALT II through the Senate. In his *Foreign Affairs* essay, Cutler blames the stalemate directly on the separation of powers. "The separation of powers, between the legislative and executive branches, whatever its merits in 1793, has become a structure that almost guarantees stalemate today," Cutler writes.

His comments at times suggest support for the Gaullist model. Speaking of the Senate's rights of treaty ratification, the frustrated Cutler says, "The case for the two-thirds rule was much stronger in 1793 when events abroad rarely affected this isolated continent and when 'entangling foreign alliances' were viewed with a skeptical eye."

But his proposals for amendments that would ameliorate the situation are a curious mishmash. The one he seems to favor most is for a six-year, one-term presidency, tied to six-year concurrent House



tial power—like Senate confirmation of national security personnel and congressional oversight of the Federal Reserve Board—but also broad increases in congressional power, through the creation of a congressional budget process and an influx of new congressional committees and legislative aides.

Conservative supporters of Nixon's and Henry Kissinger's policies charged that Congress had prevented the president from carrying out a popular mandate to achieve "peace with honor" in Vietnam and to trim federal spending. While they didn't condone the political corruption of Watergate, they blamed it on the man, not the office, and they thought that Congress' restrictions on presidential power would make a coherent foreign and domestic policy impossible. While congressional liberals seemed to operate, in the Watergate days, on the model of the British Parliament, conservative opponents of Congress were more attracted to Charles De Gaulle's French Constitution, with the president serving seven-year terms and being empowered to dissolve the legislature.

and Senate terms, with Congress and the presidency being allowed to call for new elections for the opposing branch once within the six years. This proposal would somewhat weaken the presidency in relation to Congress without really affecting the stalemate. The power of each body to dissolve the other—the refusal to grant sovereignty to either institution—would only reinforce the government's medieval character. And by extending elections to every six years, it would, in effect, replace an imperial presidency with an imperial government.

The right-wing alternative to Cutler has not been fully spelled out, but it is clearly the reassertion of the imperial presidency. In the *Washington Quarterly's* symposium, the Nixon-Ford-soon-to-be-Reagan hands express their contempt for what former Ford security advisor Brent Scowcroft describes as "the moralistic restrictions on presidential power" that Congress enacted during the Nixon years. Former Ford chief of staff, Rep. Richard Cheney, expresses alarm at congressional proposals to make the Nation-

*Continued on the following page*



# Power

Continued from page 7

al Security Advisor subject to Senate confirmation. "Presidents need the capacity to appoint a handful of people to serve in the White House who do not have to answer to Congress," Cheney says (ignoring the thousands that now serve in the Office of the President).

With Reagan's landslide and the Republican capture of the Senate, the right-wing clamor for constitutional reform will temporarily subside, but if Reagan becomes sidetracked, their voices will be raised again.

## War capitalism.

James Sundquist and Walter Dean Burnham are primarily concerned with analyzing the current crisis rather than prescribing remedies for it. Sundquist traces the

constitutional stalemate between Congress and the presidency to the disintegration of the party system. Sustained by their control of patronage and their power to nominate candidates for office, the parties provided a bridge between Congress and the president. As the parties have declined in importance, nothing holds Congress and the president together.

On one hand, party disintegration has made split-ticket voting—and therefore divided government—more likely. Of the last seven presidents, only three have had their party in power in Congress. On the other hand, even when a Democratic president enjoys a "veto-proof Congress," party disintegration makes cooperation difficult. As Sundquist argues, the decline of parties has encouraged a new individualism among elected officials, which has accelerated the "fragmentation and dispersal of authority within Congress." There is no longer a party leadership in Congress that can deliver the votes to a president.

In the wake of Watergate, the new individualism and decentralization has been combined with a new assertiveness. Sundquist contends that the results have been disastrous. "With no continuing integrative devices except in the field of fiscal policy, Congress cannot prepare a comprehensive program corresponding to the needs of the president," Sundquist says. "The new assertiveness compounded by the new individualism becomes the new anarchy."

Sundquist's solution for the present crisis is the renewal of the political parties, but he doesn't see this occurring through party or constitutional reform. "Renewal depends on something outside the party system itself," Sundquist says, "some kind of crisis that will arouse the people, polarize them and impel them to organize politically to attain their ends." Lacking this, Sundquist expects the stalemate to continue, whoever wins the presidency and Congress.

Burnham is even more pessimistic than Sundquist. Burnham contends that American

capitalism's current imperatives—to raise defense spending in response to the Soviet buildup while preventing Weimer-style inflation—require "the creation, for the first time in American history, of a permanent, internally sovereign 'hard state.' The question is not whether, but when, under whose auspices and for whose benefit, and with what level of maintenance of political freedom."

Burnham sees two possibilities: a "final critical realignment that would mobilize 'huge masses of Americans who do not vote, as well as many of those who do, behind a social democratic mass movement,'" or the "rise of some form of plebiscitarian 'war capitalism' on the ruins of the old order." The first possibility, Burnham hints, would have to move the U.S. closer to a parliamentary system, while the second might require the president to be elevated to the status of a Roman dictator.

Because the first solution would require a "revolutionary change in political consciousness—the uncontested hegemony of Lockean liberalism in the ideological domain would have to dissolve"—Burnham believes that war capitalism is the more likely course.

## King or commons.

Burnham's and Sundquist's analyses bear out a crucial component of the constitutional crisis. It cannot be separated from a general crisis of policy, politics and ideology. It is part and parcel of the decline of liberal corporate capitalism, which gained ascendancy during the Wilson administration and has tried to mold America's "antique" governmental structure to its purposes.

Liberal corporate capitalism is now breaking down. The military and economic world superiority that sustained it have eroded. And the quest for new political and legislative responses has exposed the inadequacies of America's constitutional structure. Huntington's Tudor stalemate is no longer a subtle historical comparison, but a fact of political life. As Burnham says, the question will be not whether that structure is reformed, but how: whether it will be in the direction of emperor and king or of people's assemblies and commons.

# Socialists

Continued from page 2

said, arguing for Americans to be open, above-board and unapologetic about their socialist ideas). It may also help to make socialism seem a little less subversive or screwball. But the U.S. still faces a formidable challenge to create even a minor socialist movement of hundreds of thousands, let alone a mass movement of millions, which, as Prof. Bogdan Denitch argued, is less the fault of objective difficulties than a lack of will and organization.

Even then socialists will have to go beyond calling themselves by the name while doing little more than defending liberal solutions. And they will have to take a "broad church" approach, to use Benn's phrase, to strategy. Work within the Democratic Party or not? That divided one workshop, yet two examples of recent electoral successes were raised—a socialist member of the Farmer-Labor Alliance running as a Democrat in Minnesota and a black woman member of DSOC who won a District of Columbia city council seat on the D.C. Statehood ticket. Benn's advice was that such a decision was tactical, although he suggested that saving the Democratic Party would require a political Christian Barnard capable not only of a heart transplant but of a brain and body transplant.

Much as Americans have to learn from the successes of the European socialist and communist movements, they also need to learn from the failures—and, more than that, learn from the distinctive conditions and experience in America. As Machinist president William Winpisinger, who increasingly leans toward starting a third party, said after a private dinner with the European leaders, "When I heard how confused they are, I felt much more confident."

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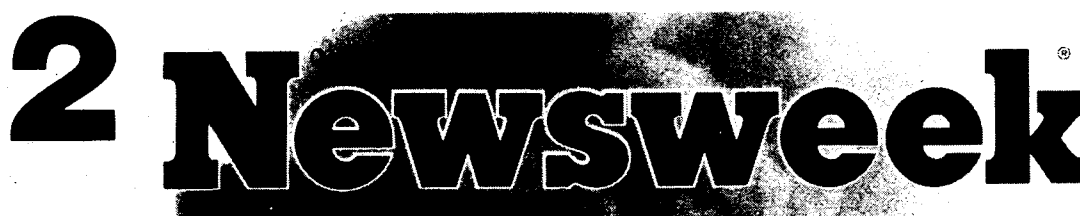


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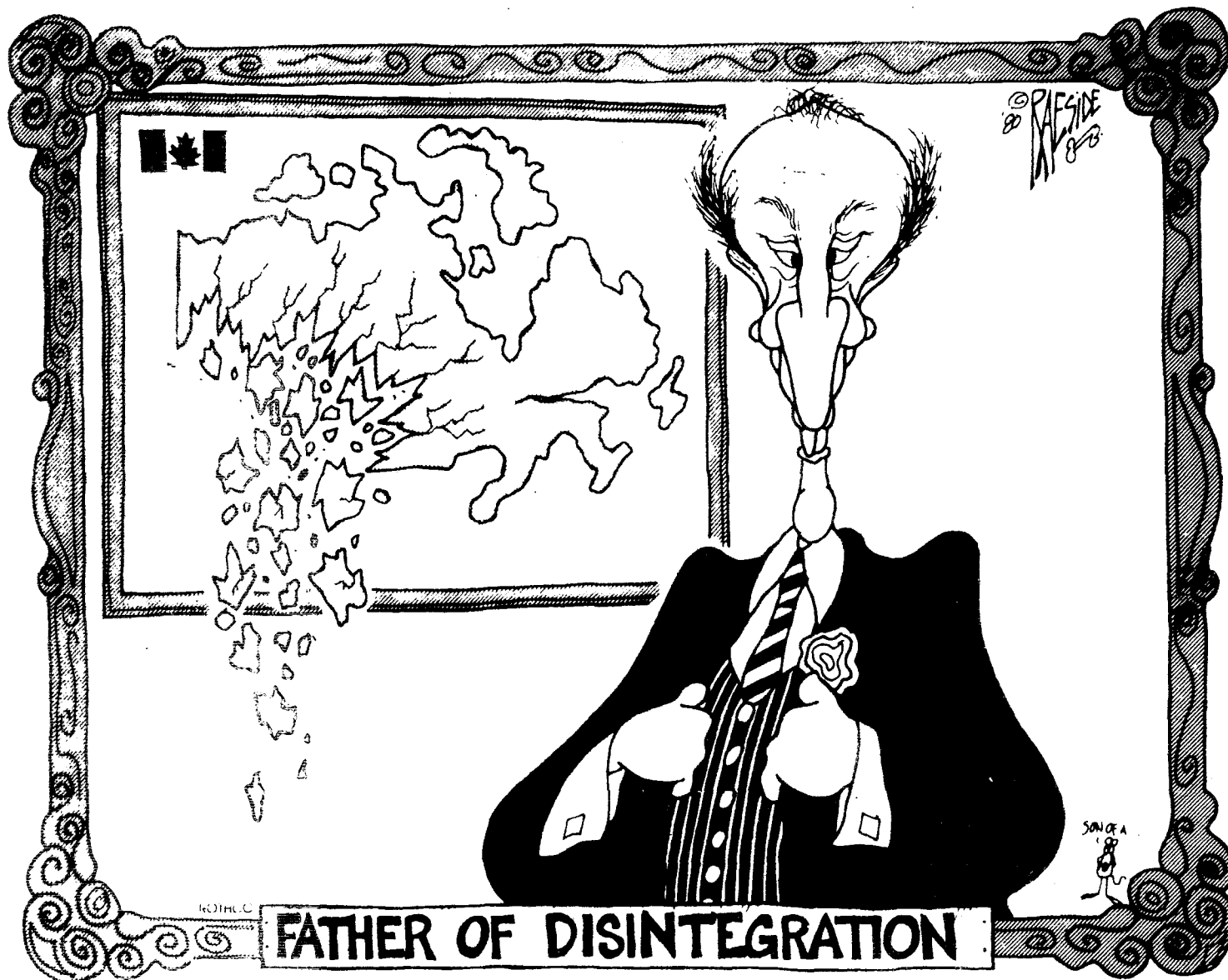
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# IN THE WORLD

## CANADA



# Separatist fervor moves west

By Jon Stewart

BANFF, ALBERTA

**L**AST MAY'S REFERENDUM that quenched the fires of separatism in French-speaking Quebec came just in time to free national fire-fighter Pierre Elliot Trudeau for duty some 1,500 miles to the west. A long-smoldering resentment against the central government in the four western provinces has now spread like a prairie fire across the oil-drenched plains of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia.

"Separation is the answer. Trudeau is the question," declares a highway billboard outside Calgary, the capital for western oil. According to recent polls, hundreds of thousands of citizens in these sparsely populated provinces are taking the message to heart and opting for a "Free West Canada."

Ironically, this latest threat to Canadian unity has resulted directly from federal efforts to take the final step toward building a modern, unified Canadian nation. Trudeau's Liberal government is attempting to "patriate" Canada's Constitution, or bring it home from Great Britain. For 113 years Canada has lived by a Constitution that is in fact an act of the British Parliament, and that can be changed only at the behest of the British. But instead of bringing Canada together, the process of writing a new Constitution is splintering the Canadian federation into mutually hostile camps—East vs. West, English vs. French, energy-producers vs. energy-consumers.

"We could come out of this a whole lot stronger, or not come out at all," speculates Richard Bowles, a Winnipeg attorney and former lieutenant governor of Manitoba.

Bowles was among some 200 Western Canadians who recently gathered here at the historic Banff Springs Hotel, a 100-year-old symbol of Canadian nation-

building, for a three-day conference on the constitutional debate.

Public opinion polls indicate that Western Canada is moving rather fast toward secession. A mid-October survey by the Canada West Foundation, a Western Canada research and lobby organization, found that 28 percent of Canadians in the four Western provinces feel that they "get so few benefits from being part of Canada that they might as well go it alone." Eighty-five percent believe that the West is ignored by the federal government in Ottawa because Ontario and Quebec have most of the votes.

All of these figures are up dramatically from what pollsters found just six months ago. "I can see the West separating," said Foundation president Stan Roberts, a committed federalist. "It could happen very quickly. All it needs is a credible leader."

The western separatist movement is being prodded by a two-pronged fork wielded by Prime Minister Trudeau. One prong is Trudeau's unilateral effort to patriate and amend the Constitution without the consent of the 10 provincial governments. The other is a new national energy policy that is regarded here as nothing short of a "socialist power grab" on western resources by the central government. Both moves suggest strongly that Trudeau intends to strengthen the federal hand vis-a-vis the provinces.

This does not go down well in the provinces, especially the western regions that are represented by only two members of parliament in the Liberal government. Also, the West has only recently discovered a sense of economic self-sufficiency after decades of being regarded as Canada's "backwoods."

No one here, or anywhere in Canada, seriously opposes patriation of the Constitution. The problem lies in the proposed amendments, which Trudeau is asking the British Parliament to enact before it sends the constitution home.

Specifically, Trudeau is asking the British to tack on a formula for making

future changes in the Constitution that would leave veto power in the hands of Ontario and Quebec, the populous central Canadian provinces that are the home turf of Trudeau's Liberal Party. The other key proposed amendment would entrench a bill of rights in the Constitution (including equal French and English language rights), and so increase the power of the federal courts over the provincial legislatures, which traditionally have been responsible for safeguarding individual rights.

### A paper coup.

Nine of the ten provinces have voiced opposition to the Trudeau proposals, and six provinces have taken the issue to the courts in a bid to stop the patriation process.

The Canadian government, said Robert Stanfield, the former Tory leader and now Canada's respected elder statesman, is asking Britain "not only to impose upon Canada an amending formula that does not have even general provincial approval, but to go further and impose constitutional changes that modify the jurisdiction of the provinces.... This is a coup d'etat just as clearly as if it were done by force."

Provincial opposition to the move is strongest in the West, where the Canada West poll showed 68 percent opposed to unilateral patriation. But "the simplistic assumption is that because people are mad at the federal government they must be turning to their provincial governments. That's not quite true," cautioned Peter McCormick, a political scientist from the University of Lethbridge (Alberta).

McCormick has proposed that the provincial-federal deadlock on the constitution be broken by electing a constitutional assembly that would act independently of either level of government—a proposal strongly endorsed at the Banff conference.

Such an approach would have the virtue of escaping one of the more painful

ironies in the Trudeau approach. In attempting to break the last bond of British colonialism, Trudeau is in effect relying on that bond to bypass his own people.

This puts the ball in Mrs. Thatcher's court, and what she will do is still an open question. Trudeau argues that the British Parliament must respond positively to a request by the central Canadian government, which purports to speak for all of Canada. To refuse to enact the amendments, he suggests, would be an act of interference in Canadian affairs.

But Trudeau's opponents—the majority of the provinces—argue that for the British to do anything more than merely patriate the constitution, without the amendments, would also be an act of interference, given the deep and widespread opposition to the amendments.

### The millionaires' rebellion.

While this battle rages across Canada, another prairie fire was set on Oct. 28 with the announcement of Canada's new national energy policy. It would cut heavily into oil and gas industry profits, "Canadianize" at least 50 percent of the industry (which is currently about 75 percent foreign controlled), and maintain domestic oil prices at a level well below world market prices.

Since Alberta and the West produce nearly 90 percent of Canada's oil, the policy is viewed here as discriminatory and vindictive.

Jim Gray, head of the Canadian Hunter oil and gas firm in Calgary, says, "Our company has spent \$600 million in Canada. But now we are diverting all of our discretionary exploration to the U.S., every damn penny. We will spend \$75 million to \$100 million in the U.S. next year, and at least two-thirds of that would have been spent in Canada if it weren't for this new policy."

The Canadian Association of Drilling Contractors predicts that, largely as a result of the policy, exploration funds in Canada will drop 40 percent in 1981, resulting in a \$2 billion spinoff loss.

In retaliation, Alberta premier Peter Lougheed has threatened to reduce the amount of oil available to the central and eastern provinces by 15 percent, thereby increasing their dependence on the much more expensive Saudi Arabian imports. Alberta also threatens to block development of two giant \$8 billion oil sands projects in the province.

Again, the issue comes down to which level of government, central or regional, has ultimate control over natural resources. Legally, the provinces own all their natural resources. Trudeau is seeking to cut into the provincial control through a variety of questionable tax and pricing policies.

As Gray sees it, "The separatists are our only hope. I think we have to have a crisis before central Canada will realize and react to the legitimate aspirations of Western Canada."

Gray is not the only oil man talking up the separatists. In fact, oil millionaires are flocking to separatist rallies all over the West, and providing a substantial bankroll for what was until recently a mostly rural, grassroots movement. Says Calgary millionaire Carl Nickle, one of the most prominent oil men in Canada and a recent convert to the separatist cause: "Virtually everything we possess west of the Great Lakes is a resource that is badly and increasingly needed in the whole world."

In fact, a sovereign Free West Canada would be the ninth largest nation on earth, and the per capita income would be greater than that of Switzerland, West Germany or the U.S.

That kind of wealth, admits Alberta Liberal Party leader Nick Taylor, who is also a millionaire oil man, can fire separatism much faster than cultural or linguistic motives. But Taylor believes the oil men are "playing a very dangerous game because the movement could get away from them, out of control. They're like little boys playing with matches," he says. "All they really want to do is scare the federal government, but they might end up burning down the country."

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Jon Stewart is an editor of Pacific News Service.



## LATIN AMERICA



well.

So the federal government set up an emergency loan program to channel as much as \$200 million to some 700 counties of the *sertao*. But the money does not reach the 70 percent of the peasants that don't own land. Instead it is invested in rural properties, aiming to modernize them to increase production. Big landowners have profited from the drought as government funds have gone to capitalize large farms.

Other distortions occur as well. Opposition party state representative Maria Luiza Fontenele says that the landowners pay sharecropping peasants with government money to improve the land that is unfit for agriculture. So they can, the next year, charge them more. The law requires a peasant to turn over 10 percent of the cotton crop from unimproved land, but allows the landowner to take 30 to 50 percent after improvements.

Dom Francisco Austregesilo Mesquita, Bishop of Afogados da Ingazeira, claims that "the government doesn't feel it has to make profound changes here, because the opposition is weak. It prefers to do things in the southeast, where the opposition is strong, courageous and dominant."

Even the state representative Jose Parante Prado, who belongs to the government party, says that the emergency plan is a farce. There are indications, he claims, that some of its resources are being invested in real estate in Fortaleza, capital of Ceara. In Rio Grande do Norte the government discovered that directors of state agencies were enrolled to receive money from the emergency plan. In Juazeiro do Norte only 913 farmers are enrolled in the emergency plan—5 percent of the 20,000 rural population.

Jose Sergio Maia owns a large farm in Paraiba with more than 800 head of cattle and good irrigation of its 1,200 square kilometers. The farm, considered a model in the area, received \$80,000 from the emergency plan. In the same state, Francisco Firmino Lima, who owns 20 square kilometers, didn't dare to ask for money from the plan. He has a family of 16, and is afraid of not being able to pay back the loan—even if he has until 1992 to do it. If he defaults he would lose his property.

And many of the landowners who asked for loans didn't get them. There are 4,000 landholders in the area; and only 100, mostly big owners, received money, which they used to improve their irrigation systems. Says Maria Luiza Fontenele, "The drought is the industry of the big landowners."

The figures are on her side. In the northeast, 67 percent of the land is owned by big landowners and only 6 percent of it is productive. The small landowners use the land to grow food; the big landowners use it to speculate and get loans. Jorge Coelho, a delegate of the Brazilian Association for Agrarian Reform, says that 4 percent of the land in Brazil is registered as pasture, but in reality isn't utilized. Only an agrarian reform, he says, can do something for the peasants without land.

Dom Antonio Batista Fragoso, Bishop of Crateus, agrees: "Capitalists that use their heads know that without increasing the productivity of the land, there would not be an expansion of their industrial products. The solutions to drought are not technocratic—they must involve the peasants at all levels."

*Ivo Patarra is a Brazilian journalist who toured the drought area this summer and reported it for Sao Paulo publications.*

# Politics of drought in Brazil

By Ivo Patarra

PERNAMBUCO, BRAZIL

**J**OAQ ALVES BARBOSA, 36 YEARS old, lives in a two-room mud house in the northeast of Brazil, for which he paid \$140. In one room is a radio, some religious prints, benches and a table. In the other there is one bed and a single hammock for the eight-member family and a mud stove. There are no windows. Two of the children never leave the fly-infested house. Both the newborn baby and the one-and-a-half-year-old boy are sick.

Edinaura Maria Barbosa, Joao's wife, has lost three of her nine children here in Afogados da Ingazeira, a county in the state of Pernambuco. The only food her family eats lately is old beans, donated by the mayor, and a pumpkin that Joao got in the street market. They do not remember the last time the family had even a tiny piece of meat: maybe five, maybe six months ago. Sometimes Joao finds somebody who pays him a dollar a day to work. But now, with this terrible drought, there is total unemployment.

Five of Brazil's 22 states—Pernambuco, Paraiba, Ceara, Rio Grande do Norte and Piau—located in the drought-prone northeast region, an area of persistent and widespread poverty for some 36 million people. One million babies are born annually—fewer than half, according to the director of a Cearan hospital, will reach the age of five. The per capita income is about \$300, compared to \$1,700 in the country as a whole.

The drought area, also called the *sertao*, should have fewer problems than similar areas of Australia, Egypt or the southern U.S. that also depend on irrigation as a condition for human settlement. The water stored underground behind the earthen dams and underground in the northeast should be sufficient for the whole population of 120 million of Brazil. Yet even when ponds are built, there is no real effort to build a wide irrigation system that would serve all. The largest reservoir in the northeast, the *acude* of Oros, which stores more than 60 kilometers of water, only irrigates 30,000 square kilometers of land, though it was built in 1960 to irrigate 250,000 square kilometers. The inhabitants of small villages throughout the area often have to pay for expensive and impure water, brought in by water carts.

Moreover, 60 percent of the natural vegetation has been destroyed to create pastureland for the big landowners, speeding up the process of desertification and displacing rural families who

swell the slum population of the cities.

"If the destruction continues at this pace, the area will become the second largest desert in the world, right after the Sahara," says ecologist Joao Vasconcelos Sobrinho, who works with a governmental agency in the northeast.

Joao Alves Barbosa, who owes more than \$60 to a small businessman, has no more credit to buy food. Even if they had money, they wouldn't be able to buy corn—the drought ruined the entire crop. Joao only eats every second day; his small children get only manioc flour mixed with water and salt to eat. The family must haul water from a well one kilomet-

er away.

Joao once worked for the federal government's "emergency plan." But after six weeks without pay, he walked off the construction job on a private farm. The owner had cashed the federal money but didn't pay the peasants.

### The emergency plan.

In 1980, the continuing absence of rain obliged the government of Brazil once more to declare a public calamity in large portions of the northeast. The entire crop of corn and beans—the peasants' subsistence—was lost. And cotton, basic for local agriculture economics, suffered as



## Unions

Continued from page 3

Working people are looking for alternatives." Walter Lippmann of Service Employees International Local 535, which has already passed a resolution calling for a labor party, charged that Democrats and Republicans have worked together on bills to deny welfare appeals and deny workers cost-of-living increases. Mark Friedman of International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Local 685, San Diego, criticized the Democrats for allowing Klan member Tom Metzger to run as a party nominee for

state legislature.

Not all of the criticism was directed at the Democrats. Virginia Belmontez of Retail Clerk's Local 7 assailed high-ranking union officials, who, she said, should "start acting like union organizers instead of corporate executives."

Lee Brown of San Francisco's Hotel Workers Local 2 and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists echoed Belmontez' criticisms, provoking a heated reply from the podium that the trade union movement had been out in front of every movement to help people in the last 25 years. Whereupon someone from the audience yelled out "Vietnam?" "Well, we have made some mistakes," came the reply from the podium.

John Reiman of Carpenters Local 36, Oakland, cautioned the conference that

talk is not enough. "The thing that's most critical is what specific, concrete things we propose for the labor movement and other progressive groups to meet the coming threats. Do we simply propose to continue with tactics that are a proven failure? Many of our captains are more willing to go down with the ship than to change its direction. What we must do is mobilize our membership around the economic, social and political issues to build towards a labor party."

And how real are prospects for a labor party, John Henning was asked at the conference adjourned. "The prospects for a labor party," he replied, "are as real as the reform of the Democratic Party."

*Mike Berkowitz serves on the SEIU Local 535 executive board.*



## EUROPE

# Socialist parties champion interests of the Third World

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

EUROPE'S SOCIALIST PARTIES have embarked on a collision course with the Reagan administration by agreeing to champion progressive movements and human rights in Latin America. At its 15th Congress in Madrid this November, the Socialist International, more responsive than ever to appeals for help from the Third World, called for reform of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and set up a prestigious committee to defend the Nicaraguan revolution that is slated to go to Washington to plead for the Sandinistas. The committee includes SI chairman Willy Brandt, Austrian premier Bruno Kreisky, former Swedish prime minister Olof Palme and French socialists Francois Mitterrand and Michel Rocard. It is headed by Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) leader Felipe Gonzalez, who seems to have edged out fading Portuguese socialist leader Mario Soares as the International's main link between Europe and Latin America.

The Socialist International congress was held in Madrid simultaneously with the big international Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and was considerably more interesting. The fact that the two meetings were held at the same time was hardly coincidental, and the original intention of at least some of the SI leaders—notably Willy Brandt, whose German Social Democratic Party (SPD) carried by far the most weight—was no doubt to cheer on detente and European disarmament talks. But with the freeze on East-West relations following the events in Afghanistan, now exacerbated by the situation in Poland, and with Moscow waiting to see what the Reagan administration is really up to, the SI call for a European disarmament conference could not have much echo. The spotlight shifted to Latin America, where everyone expects the worst as a result of Reagan's election.

Latin American revolutionaries flocked to the SI congress. Their eloquent denunciations of U.S.-backed military dictatorships and their PSOE hosts' eagerness to proclaim Spain a new halfway house between Europe and the Third World gave the Madrid meeting an air of Latin passion that contrasted with the usual technocratic pragmatism of Nordic social democracy. Sandinista Bayardo Arce Castano warned that a process was underway in Nicaragua to "create internal conditions favorable to an external aggression." Delegates showed their support for the Nicaraguan revolution by giving Arce Castano an ovation.

Another guest at the congress, Jaime Paz Samora, vice president of the Bolivian government-in-hiding, explained to Jose Garcon, correspondent of the Paris daily *Liberation*, that Latin American revolutionaries who used to dismiss social democracy as "imperialism's last card" were now drawn to the social democrats, despite ideological differences, by one essential common ideal: "the notion of democracy exists for them."

"The main parties in the SI take Latin America seriously for economic reasons but also for political and humanitarian reasons," said Paz Samora, "so we have converging interests." The SI provides an alternative to Latin Americans who don't want to have to choose between the two superpowers "or become the hostages of their confrontation." He noted that the USSR has heavy invest-

ments in the Bolivian mining industry. European social democracy is no more motivated by economic interest than anyone else—and it at least cares about human rights.

In its final resolution, the SI reminded its European members that their countries' participation in the economic life of Latin America "should not contribute to lending legitimacy to military dictatorships, as has often been the case."

The SI expressed its support for "all progressive forces in the southern cone and in Central America."

## Squaring off with the IMF.

But the recent defeat of Michael Manley in Jamaica brought home to the SI that its purely verbal support could not save a member party when it dared to reject IMF dictates. Swiss social democrat Jean Ziegler told the congress that IMF conditions for granting credit aimed at "forcibly integrating countries into the world capitalist market and opening them up to the multinationals." Ziegler called on the SI to join with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in a joint

military coup in Turkey has aroused serious apprehension of contagion in the Mediterranean area. Felipe Gonzalez opened the congress by expressing concern over the "aggressivity of the conservative right" in Europe—certain to be encouraged by the Reagan administration (which was the main topic of strictly off-the-record talk at the congress).

In this context, Gonzalez' condemnation of terrorism as "one of the major enemies of democracy" that "in many cases enjoys outside support" reflected not only a particular Spanish problem but also a broader fear that mysterious terrorists may crop up in any country to create disorders eventually justifying a military takeover, as in Turkey. Soares and others deplored NATO's "tolerance" for the Turkish coup.

## Divisive issues.

While the socialists and social democrats agreed on the principles of East-West detente and North-South relations based on something other than resource pillage and arms sales, they split over the Palestinian question and the Polisario. And these divisions point up an underlying weakness of the Socialist International's outreach to the Third World: the fragility or political ambiguity of its potential allies in the poor countries.

A Palestine Liberation Organization

number of parties, and thus there was never any question of considering it for SI membership.

A split occurred between a group led by the Spanish and Italian socialists who wanted to recognize the PLO, and another group led by the Germans and Austrians who wanted to endorse the Israeli Labor Party and make a special appeal to Jordan to take part in peace negotiations. The final resolution merely described Peres' party as "the only viable force for peace" and expressed pious hopes for a just peace with security for all that takes into account "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people."

Having lost out in the PLO battle, the PSOE turned its energies to getting the SI to support the Polisario in its battle against Morocco in the former Spanish Sahara. At this, Senegalese president Leopold Sedar Senghor abstained from the entire resolution in protest against the alleged "racism" of the Polisario. Aside from problems between black Africans and Arabs in that part of the continent, Senghor is a very close friend of the French government that supports Morocco. His own socialism is extremely doubtful, but the SI is anxious to have African members, and on a continent mostly ruled by single-party military dictatorships, a head of state who permits

## The Madrid congress passed a bold resolution against IMF policies toward underdeveloped countries, but split over the PLO.



Nicaraguan delegate Bayardo Arce Castano, who received an ovation, was one of many Latin American revolutionaries that flocked to the congress.

investigation of the evil effects of IMF policy. He also proposed creating a solidarity fund to help workers in the Third World.

French socialist Jean-Pierre Chevenement called on the Socialist International to take the lead in a "crusade" to reform the IMF and make its rules more favorable to poor countries.

The final resolution called on the IMF to "stop imposing unacceptable credit conditions that thwart progress and social justice in Third World countries." The Scandinavian, French and Spanish parties played a leading role in keeping the resolution from being watered down for fear of arousing U.S. wrath.

The relative boldness of the Madrid congress seems in large part due to genuine and growing alarm at the worldwide rise of right-wing forces imperiling the most basic political freedoms. The recent

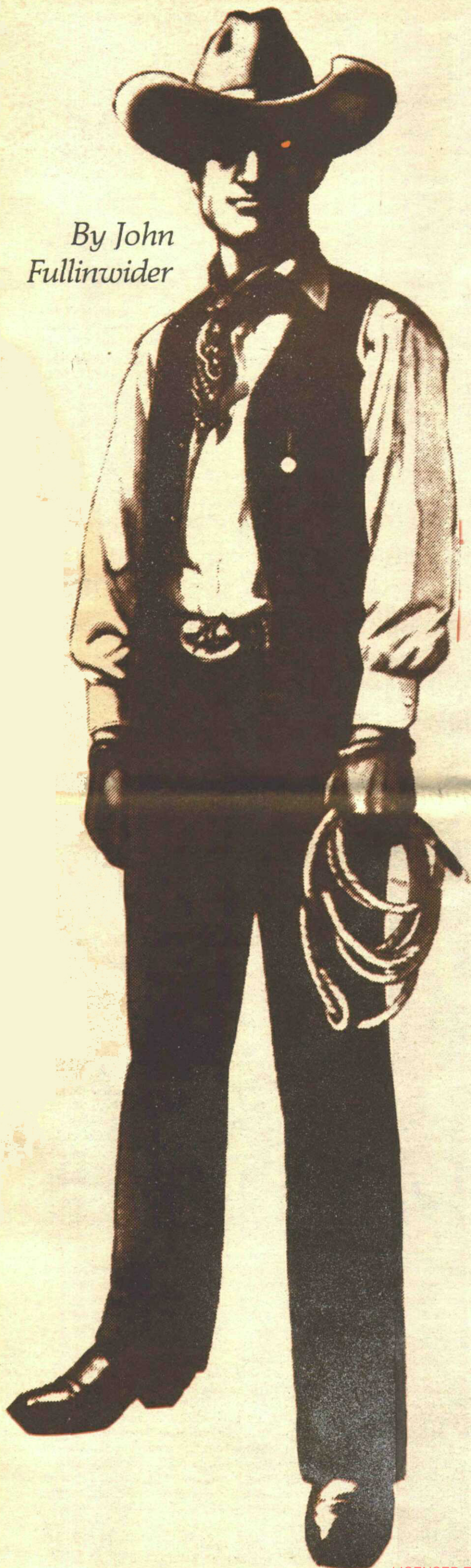
delegation was conspicuously haunting the corridors of the congress; it hoped the Spanish Socialists would succeed in getting the SI to recognize the PLO as "representative of the Palestinian people." But Israeli Labor Party leader Shimon Peres succeeded in convincing the Europeans that such a step by the Socialist International could lose the next Israeli elections for his party.

The Europeans publicly differed in their evaluation of the PLO, with French socialist Francois Mitterrand closest to the Israeli position that the PLO should be disqualified as a negotiating partner because it "wants to destroy the state of Israel." On the other hand, Austrian chancellor Kreisky defined the PLO's aim as the "liberation of Palestine" and said he was for that. Kreisky also pointed out that the PLO was not socialist, but an umbrella organization including a

at least a semblance of democratic electoral opposition seems good enough as a starter.

Five parties were admitted to the SI, bringing membership to 49. They include the Democratic Socialist Party of Guatemala, the Democratic Left Party of Ecuador and the New Jewel movement led by Maurice Bishop, whose attempt at progressive rule in the small Caribbean island of Grenada looks like a prime target for destabilization capers now that Manley is out and Reagan is in. The first Arab party with PLO connections to be admitted, the Socialist Progressive Party of Lebanon, also faces a precarious future. As for the new African member, the Volta Progressive Front, it was banned 10 days later by a military coup in Upper Volta, which had been one of the freest, and still is one of the poorest, countries in Africa. ■





By John  
Fullinwider

# DALLAS

## The City With No



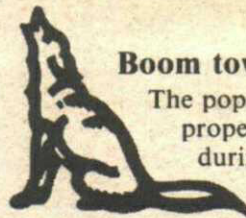
### Corporate migration.

When Dallas Mayor Robert Folsom told the *Wall Street Journal* last fall that "the system probably works better when a poor man is not in office," no one asked: Better for whom?

Dallas' unemployment rate is the envy of most American cities. Indeed, with its largely unorganized workforce, minimal taxes and highly publicized pro-business atmosphere, the home of the Hunt brothers has become something of a corporate Mecca.

While the relocation of American Airlines' corporate headquarters from New York to Dallas was the most publicized move, Diamond-Shamrock, General Telephone & Electronics, Mitsubishi Aircraft and a score of other corporations have moved their headquarters here over the past three years. Even the Girl Scouts came.

Mayor Folsom and city manager George Schrader have them all to luncheons, where the chief executive officers of newly transplanted firms learn about the "entrepreneurial cooperative effort" between the public and private sectors in Dallas. They may be told about the country's largest airport and the new \$100,000 houses constructed "within walking distance of downtown," but they will not be told what effect the boom in Dallas is having on most local families.



### Boom town.

The population of Dallas proper grew slowly during the '70s, since many of the immigrants from the Frostbelt settled in suburban areas. More than half of the communities within the city limits actually lost population in the last decade.

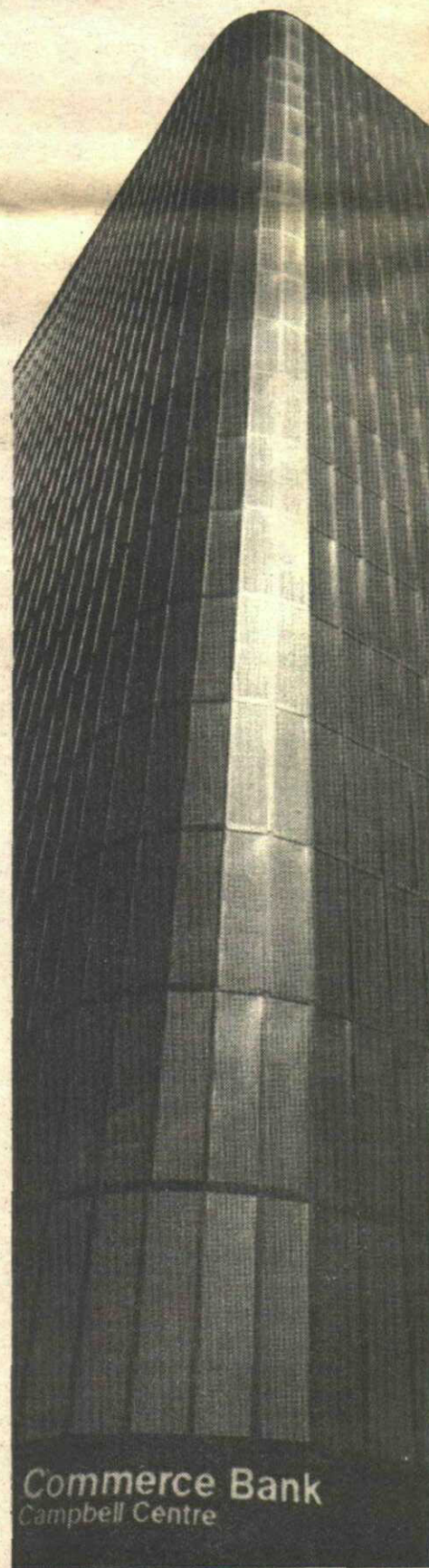
The virtually all-black neighborhoods of South Dallas suffered the greatest losses. A combination of state and federal highway projects, new school district facilities and the continual expansion of the Texas State Fairgrounds drove over 20,000 people from the area. Roughly a thousand single-family homes were bulldozed.

Dallas as a whole enjoys a 3 to 4 percent unemployment rate, but that rate is twice as high in the southern communities. People in South Dallas have trouble getting to North Dallas where most of the jobs are. There is no direct bus service, for instance, between South Dallas and the manufacturing centers along north Stemmons Freeway.

Over 60 percent of the vacant land in the city is in the southern sectors, but it is not being marketed. The city's growth is all to the north. Of the southlands, the city's Office of Economic Development (OED) says, "There has been a fairly decided lack of interest in the area, particularly by local developers."

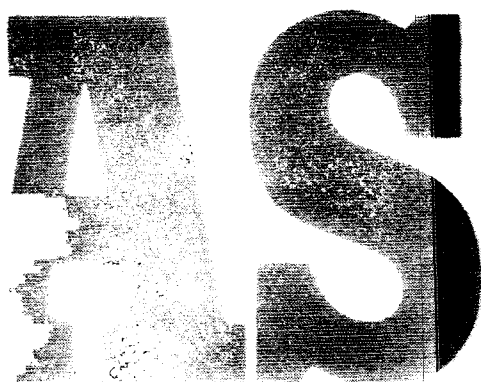
One of the biggest local developers is Mayor Folsom himself. His financial worth is "in excess of \$7 million," and he is either a partner, manager, president, vice-president or member of the board of over 50 businesses. Folsom obviously has more than civic pride in

The mayor is one of the biggest local developers in Dallas, and owns 20% of the land. He is a partner or sits on the board of over fifty major corporations.



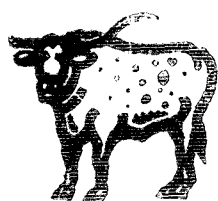
Commerce Bank  
Campbell Centre





## Limits?

mind when he promotes growth and development. When the city council voted to annex the northside town of Renner, Mayor Folsom abstained. He just happened to own 20 percent of the town's land.



**Sky's the limit.**  
Republic National Bank recently christened Dallas

"the city with no limits." But Dallas has reached a very tangible limit to expansion—its own city boundary. OED notes that "it is getting increasingly difficult for the City of Dallas to compete [with suburbs] for the construction of single-family homes because of land availability and cost." The city council and school board worry as their tax base flees to the suburbs. But even more disturbing to the land developers, bankers, utility executives and defense contractors is the lack of industrial space.

Roughly two-thirds of the available industrial sites in Dallas County lie outside the city limits. Unless the city can obtain additional acreage for commercial and industrial expansion, Dallas won't be able to compete with its suburban and other Sunbelt cities for investment dollars.

As the available land shrinks, the city has to shift from new development to redevelopment—beginning in the city's core. Two other factors contribute to this shift. First, new development rarely pays for itself. A new community's demand for services is likely to be greater than its tax contribution. Upgrading older neighborhoods is cheaper than building new ones.

The second factor is transportation. The automobile facilitated the growth of suburban Dallas, but as the cost to households of auto operation and uncertainty about fuel supplies grow, the attractions of the central city grow as well. Some 120,000 commuters make their way downtown daily, 70 percent in private cars. To ease the congestion, the city council proposes to build elevated pedestrian "skybridges" between banks and offices to keep people off the streets and out of the way.

These beginning stages of redevelopment—industrialization and gentrification—have disrupted inner-city communities in East, West and South Dallas.

While South Dallas housing is being decimated by redlining, ineffective home repair programs and eminent domain proceedings, the Army Corps of Engineers and city's financial elite are planning to industrialize the Trinity River floodplain south of downtown. The plan calls for a series of levees and channels to reclaim some 2,400 acres of privately-owned land for industrial use—boosting the value of the land 20 times over.

Local voters turned down similar proposals by sizable majorities in 1973 and again in 1978. But the Army completed its engineering studies and the city council dug the creek channels anyway, using Community Development Block Grant Funds. The most recent Corps report concludes,

"There is no practicable alternative to industrial development in South Dallas." In March, over the objections of environmental and inner-city activists, the council reaffirmed its support of the Army's "previous planning" and urged Congress to continue funding.

South and West Dallas are scheduled for further industrial development. The Chicano and black neighborhoods of West Dallas lost nearly 10,000 people in the '70s as a result of commercial expansion. The area still has the highest unemployment rate in Dallas County, in spite of its proximity to the job-abundant Stemmons Freeway area.

A leading local developer, Trammel Crow, has applied for a multi-million dollar Urban Development Action Grant to build his 134-acre industrial park in the West Dallas "pocket of poverty." OED predicts that West Dallas is "on the verge" of complete industrialization. Perhaps if another 10,000 people can be driven from their homes, there will be enough jobs to go around.

In East Dallas, over 650 single-family homes were bulldozed in the last decade. At one point, the Army was called in to "tag" substandard units. Small frame houses fell prey to the public-private partnership to "revitalize" the community by destroying much of the low-cost housing and gentrifying the rest.

Working-class whites—many originally from rural areas surrounding Dallas—had only begun to organize against absentee slumlords when they found themselves increasingly displaced by wealthy young professionals attracted to the crumbling Victorian mansions and prairie-style architecture of "Old East Dallas." The newcomers called themselves "urban pioneers" and, after years of lobbying the city council, had their houses designated as historic landmarks.

In one neighborhood, Exall Park, city manager Schrader arranged for Dallas to guarantee an investment in new innercity housing by tract-home magnate, David Fox. Armed with a \$3.25 per sq. ft. guarantee and a patrol of building code inspectors, Fox & Jacobs went to work. Promising to build "moderately priced" housing, Fox began buying land for less than a dollar a foot. Exall Park, which had housed nearly 2,000 poor people in the early '70s, was completely leveled and replaced by Bryan Place, a 15-acre enclave of \$100,000 homes.

The tenants did not receive relocation benefits. Moving from place to place, paying higher rents and doubling up as rental units grew scarce, low-income tenants called themselves "urban Indians."



### Private officials.

Nobody elected the highest paid government official in Texas, Dallas'

city manager. He is not required to file a personal financial statement, nor is his term of office limited. (Dallas' charter does allow for the city council to remove a manager, but it has never happened.)

Roughly four out of ten American cities are governed by this council-manager system—and are run, in effect, "like a business corporation." The Dallas model was developed in 1894 by the National Municipal League (NML). The businessmen, lawyers and academics of the NML launched a "good government" campaign to fight "corruption." But the effect was to quash the growing influence of minorities and labor in turn-of-the-century American city halls.

A model city charter, NML maintained, would include city-wide, at-large elections of council members

*Residents of East Dallas gather to block a toll road to the suburbs that would have destroyed 900 homes.*

in non-partisan elections that would not coincide with national campaigns, and little or no salaries for council members. Local issues were thought to be technical problems that required only expert advice as to how a project could be accomplished. Public debate over why a project should be undertaken and who benefitted from it was inappropriate.

These notions were initially popularized in the Commission Movement that began in Galveston in 1903. City government was to be run by "strictly business methods" through five commissioners elected at large, each in charge of a specific department. Dallas adopted the Galveston plan in 1907 after a well-financed campaign by the *Dallas Morning News* and a newly organized group of businessmen called the Citizens Association.

There remained a few problems with this system: people who administered city affairs were still elected. But in 1931 the city dropped commission government in favor of the council-manager system where those who administered government were appointed, not elected. The Citizens Association became the Citizens

*In Dallas the city government makes very few decisions. A study found that only seven men make them. Not one is elected to public office.*



Charter Association and went on to win 90 percent of Dallas elections over the next 40 years.

### A simple Yes or No.

It seemed strange to some observers that Texas' Centennial should be celebrated in Dallas in

1936. After all, the city didn't even exist in the year of the Alamo. R.L. "Bob" Thornton, head of Dallas' Mercantile Bank, thought it perfectly reasonable. And when he raised \$3.5 million in private donations to fund the celebration, the Texas state legislature saw his logic.

While Thornton was hustling the money, having problems getting a firm commitment from various committees and businesses, he began to envision a group of men who could simply say Yes or No to an idea—and who could deliver their companies without asking anybody else.

Thornton and Nate Adams (of First National Bank) set up such an organization the following year. One hundred men, each one the chief executive officer of a major corporation, became members of the Dallas Citizens Council. Members may have rejected Thornton's idea to call themselves "The Yes or No Council," but through the years they have held a veto-power over every significant public enterprise.

There are about 200 members today, though actual policy-making has always been controlled by a much smaller number. The only major study of Dallas' power structure, by Carol Thometz in 1963, found just seven men in charge of all the main decisions. And not one person she interviewed listed a local elected official among the "decision-makers."

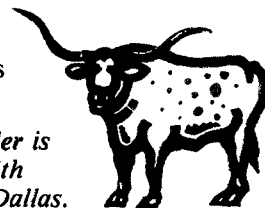
The present executive board of the Citizens Council includes three bankers, an insurance executive, a defense contractor, two real estate developers, an oil man and the publisher of Dallas' evening newspaper.

The conflict between the people who govern Dallas and the people who live here began to escalate last April when the results of a comprehensive revision of the city's property tax system were released. The tax department spent eight years reappraising residential property, and homeowners faced tax increases of up to 500 percent. The tax burden shifted from corporations to neighborhoods because tax officials did not update assessments of business personal property and commercial real estate.

While wealthy North Dallas homeowners called a Proposition 13 type referendum to limit the tax rate, an East Dallas coalition challenged the constitutionality of the tax roll and convinced a district judge to enjoin its use. Taxes may be due at the end of January, but these challenges at the polls and in the courts are still pending. Meanwhile, both the tax director and his chief assistant have resigned, and the city manager has indicated he wants to return to the private sector.

Private corporations and an obedient city government constructed to promote their interests have combined to reorganize Dallas' social landscape. While neighborhoods have been threatened with disintegration, the process of industrialization and reurbanization is by no means complete. The alliance of city government and the private sector has been undercut by the dispersal of the tax base outside the city—an outcome that the city itself promoted—and challenged by the neighborhoods that remain intact within its limits.

*John Fullinwider is a researcher with KERA-TV in Dallas.*





# LETTERS

**IN THESE TIMES** is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

## OMISSIONS!

**T**HE EDITORS OF *ITT* MADE CHANGES in the text of my article "The Farmer-Labor Party's Legacy to the Socialist Left" (*ITT*, Oct. 8), which gave parts of it a different political meaning from what I had intended. One change was in the closing series of questions concerning the lessons of this historical experience. Where I had written, "How should mass parties and Marxist-Leninist vanguard parties relate to each other?" you struck out the word "How." That omission could not have been a typographical error. It leaves the impression that I considered such groups as the Communist Party and the Socialist Workers Party alien and disruptive to the movement. Quite the contrary, they constituted important creative forces within it and provided much of the FLP's sense of direction during its best years. At times, however, their animosity toward each other created serious problems for the movement as a whole.

The other omission referred directly to one such problem. After having noted that the split of the new CIO from the AFL was troublesome for the FLP, because the AFL had played such a large part in the party's creation, and also because Communists and Trotskyists were influential in opposing union federations, I went on to illustrate how damaging their battles became in these two sentences, which you deleted from the article: "The AFL fiercely opposed Communist efforts to build a Popular Front through the FLP and the CIO, and staged a mass rally on April 11, 1938, featuring Trotskyist speakers opposing any form of unity with Stalinists. These divisions led the AFL forces to embrace Mayor Latimer of Minneapolis, despite his record of personally leading scabs across picket lines, when the latter led anti-Communist moves within the FLP and shrewdly lent his name to the international defense of Trotsky."

These deleted lines had touched up-

on an extraordinary blank page in the history of the American left. Although many books have recounted the Trotskyists' splendid trade union role in the Minneapolis teamsters, none of them says a word about their political stance within the FLP during the late '30s.

The problem, however, goes beyond the need to combat the falsification of history. A renewed socialist movement in America must confront both the honor and the errors of its own predecessors openly and honestly. This cannot be done by making criticisms of the Communist Party permissible (or even obligatory), while forbidding criticism of others on the left. The historical series is an important step in this process of renewal. When *ITT* publishes the second half of the series, it must permit the authors to discuss the socialist movement's past as they see it, and not rewrite the articles to conform to the political views of *ITT*'s editors.

The strength and importance of *ITT* lies in its promise of a socialist press "open to a wide range of views on the left." Let us try to live up to that promise.

—David Montgomery  
New Haven, Conn.

## OUR NEEDS

**I**T IS UNFORTUNATE THAT THE substance and style of *ITT*'s political reporting is so out of synch with its editorial positions. Editorially, *ITT* champions the local approach: by pitching political action at the presidential level, the left is simply not in the ball game. A sound and popular socialist politics will only develop from local political programs and policies.

I think this is correct, but I also notice that *ITT*'s political coverage is basically national. We rarely find sustained coverage of local political developments. We don't see detailed and constant coverage of the folks in Santa Cruz, Detroit, or of the Ohio Public Interest Campaign.

I don't mean to say that *ITT* never covers any of these items. I do mean to

say that the failure to cover the political developments in, say, California after the "tax revolt" raises problems about what is important in building a socialist politics and what is reported in *ITT*.

The imbalance may reflect a lack of funds, folks, time and energy. My own feeling is that there is a certain style to *ITT* that limits and frustrates local contacts. You folks seem to have spent a lot of time on the 19th floor sundeck but wouldn't know where the boiler room is if your life depended on it.

*ITT* needs to cultivate local contacts. It needs to break out of its in-house, and largely academic network. It needs reporters, not professors of sociology. Remember that *ITT* needs the people on tenants' rights boards, on community organization committees, etc., far more than they need it.

—Jim Celenzo  
Providence, R.I.

## NARROWNESS

**I**N *THESE TIMES*' ELECTION ANALYSIS reflects a narrowness typical of many on the left. It confines its explanation of the Reagan victory to discontent over the obvious bread and butter issues. In the process much vital reality is omitted:

Among the population there is profound misogyny and homophobia, frustration over meaningless work and loss of community, and a pervasive sense that all is tenuous and brittle. Not to notice this is a kind of economism that constricts and truncates social insight. The New Left, the counter-culture, the gay and feminist movements slip from memory. We fail to attend to the pain and hope of people we wish to reach. In some sense, we bolster and ratify the one-dimensional existence.

—Arnold Sachar  
New York

## GIVE 'EM A BREAK

**I**F ANTI-SLAVERY FORCES HAD NOT encouraged people to break with the major parties that were not dealing with the most important issue of the day—human enslavement—and join the Republican Party, slavery might still be with us.

And yet, *In These Times* has the nerve to tell us in its editorial (*ITT*, Nov. 19) that building a third party in America to abolish wage slavery and build socialism is impossible and we must stay in the Democratic Party?! Shame on you!

You are as unrealistic as those who thought that they could get the Democratic Party of their day to take an anti-slavery stand. As the Democratic Party then was controlled by powerful and wealthy slaveholders, so too is the Democratic Party of today controlled by powerful and wealthy capitalists. When will you ever face up to that reality and recognize the need for a genuinely anti-capitalist party? So the Socialist Party failed to build a lasting left-wing movement in this country. So the Citizens' Party and all the rest failed to get any sizeable vote in this last election. The point is that we keep trying.

Maybe in the '80s we will be able to build an American Labor Party, if we can convince enough unionists to quit the Democratic Party. But you are telling people in your editorial to stick with the Democratic Party!

Be brave, take a chance, break with the Democratic Party—it's been done before! The goal is worth it.

—Donald F. Busky  
Local chair, Socialist Party  
of Greater Philadelphia

## DUE CREDIT

**D**AVID MOBERG (*ITT*, NOV. 12) OVER-rates the role of Javits and undervalues the impact of the media, most notably the *New York Times*, in the defeat of Elizabeth Holtzman in the recent New York senatorial contest. Not

only was Javits' candidacy sustained by the initial endorsement of the *Times*, even more important was the *Times*' coverage of the campaign.

The *Village Voice* ran a remarkable series of exposures of D'Amato that showed him to be not merely an extreme right-wing ideologue but also a dishonest and hypocritical party hack. The *Voice*'s evidence and charges were suppressed by the *Times*. Its reporters offered only the vague denials of the misdoings by D'Amato without ever spelling out the original charges. They cooperated fully with D'Amato and Javits in focusing on allegations of Holtzman's anti-business and anti-"defense" biases.

The *Times* has, of course, returned to the Cold War camp with a vengeance. Their general news coverage of the Soviet menace and our lagging development of overkill also helped to keep Holtzman on the defensive and create the militaristic and know-nothing environment in which a D'Amato can properly enter the Senate.

With a characteristic touch of self-deception, Anthony Lewis also denounced Javits in the *Times* for his role in the outcome of the senatorial contest. I am prepared to give some credit to a great senator who, in contrast with Holtzman, has surely demonstrated a wonderful sensitivity to the needs of business. But we must also give credit to an equally great newspaper.

—Edward S. Herman  
Philadelphia

## NARCISSISM

**B**OB FITCH'S LETTER (*ITT*, NOV. 19) About *Ordinary People* not being about truly ordinary people leads me to consider whether American film in general can ever come to grips with ordinary people. Isn't it still true that the movies still fulfill their age-old function as dream machine? Can the U.S. film industry, with its financial expense and risk, ever serve any other purpose?

During the Depression, what did Americans see on the screen? Sitdown strikers? Breadlines? If they saw Depression images at all, they were likely to be of the down-and-out leisure class in films like *Grand Hotel*. More likely were vicarious images such as in *Dinner at Eight*.

During the new "hard times," we now see films whose images attempt to identify with the audience. Thus, the characters in *Ordinary People*, however rich, are shown to be just like us. In fact, they are not. They are people who have the resources to cope.

Does this mean it is wrong for us to empathize with film characters simply because they are rich? No, but we should remember the ideology implicit in films such as *Ordinary People*. These films have a common self-indulgent strain which keeps the fact that they are about people of ample means tidily in the background. They are appealing because their characters are basically "creative" people; therefore, their means are of the right sort.

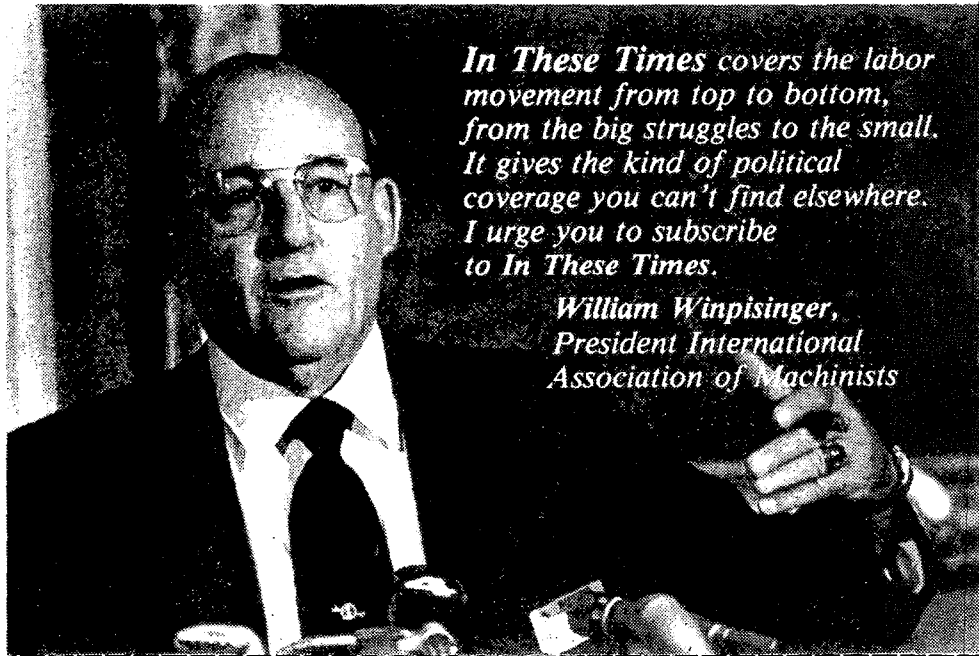
The audience for this sort of "serious" film has narrowed so that the "creative" people themselves comprise a majority of their viewers. Hollywood is no longer providing dreams for the masses, but it is providing them for the very people on the screen. If this is so, their narcissism is showing. Not to mention their whininess.

—Steven Blackwood  
Milwaukee, Wisc.

## CORRECTION

The author of last week's centerspread on the Ku Klux Klan was Eric Davin. His name was inadvertently dropped. Our regrets.

**Editor's note:** Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.



*In These Times* covers the labor movement from top to bottom, from the big struggles to the small. It gives the kind of political coverage you can't find elsewhere. I urge you to subscribe to *In These Times*.

William Winpisinger,  
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Association of Machinists

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STW



ROBERTA LYNCH

# The courts should be the last resort

I HAVE NOTHING AGAINST lawyers. Some of my best friends are and all that. Moreover, I couldn't agree more with all the contemporary Clarence Darrows who hasten to remind us that the people in power in this country have learned how to use the law—in many cases written the law—to serve their own ends. We *do* need attorneys on our side to make sure that the



plex—or is made so complex—that the "layman" (or woman) can't grasp it without the help of the expert.

I happen to be among those who believe in the necessity for specialists: some things *are* so complex that it would take a lot more time than this average person wants to spend before they could be grasped. But more and more there is a tendency to complicate things that could—and should—be simple.

In my state the workers' compensation system is supposed to be a straightforward program of no-fault insurance. In reality, it has evolved to the point where nearly 79,000 cases required attorneys in 1978 alone. The technicalities built into similar laws in most states mean that nation-wide 42¢ of every workers' comp dollar goes into legal and administrative costs rather than into aid for the injured worker. And workers end up feeling that it's all beyond their ken.

Another element is a kind of depersonalization that leads people to seek legal redress for every form of personal conflict. The breakdown of communities means that informal mediating fig-

urers have replaced engineers as the high priests of capitalist development.

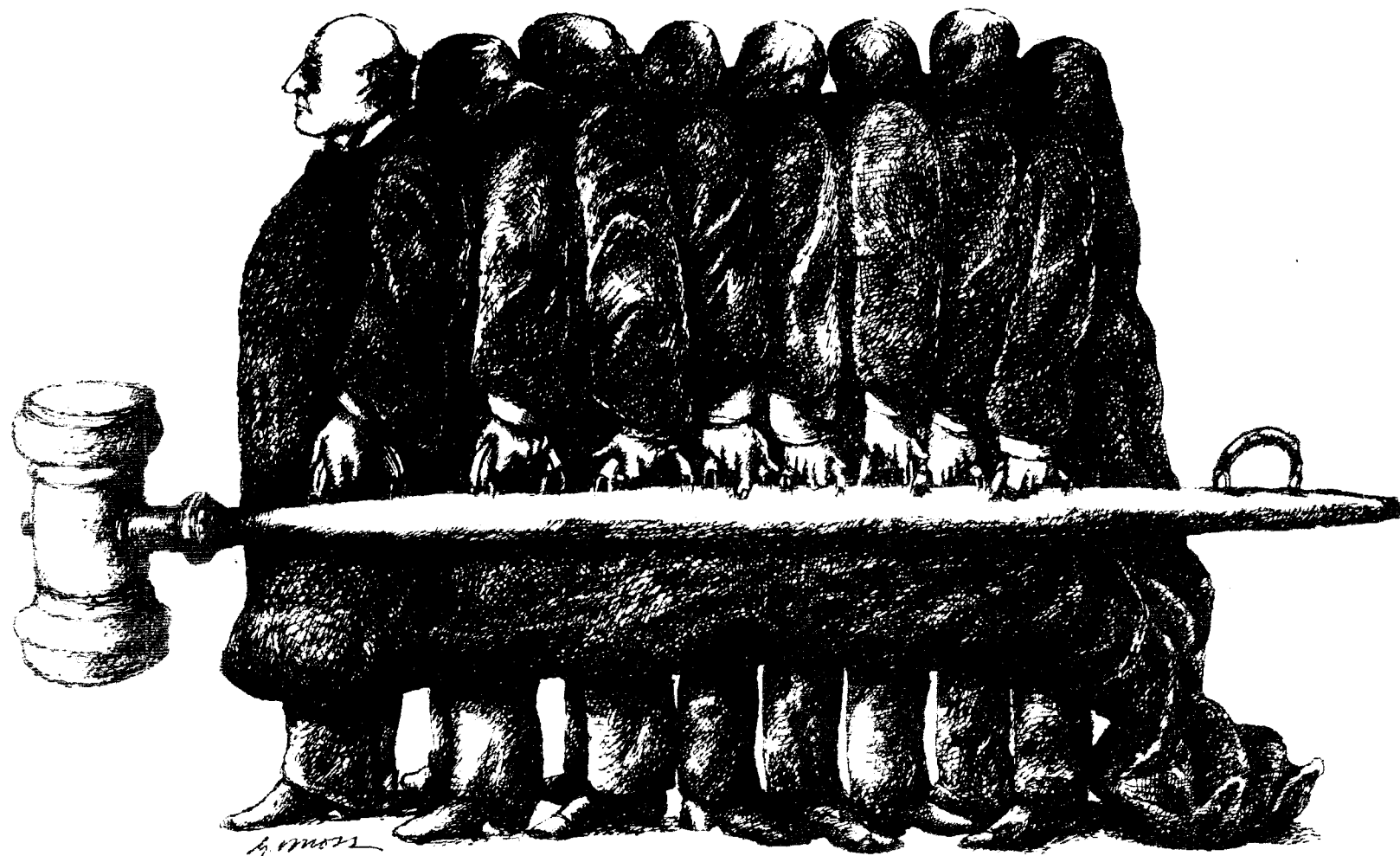
At the same time, attempts to control the workforce have reached new levels of sophistication through the use of legal tactics. In fact, lawyers have replaced personnel managers—and Pinkertons—as the primary agents in undermining the operation or organization of unions.

I suspect that these trends at the top tend to make those at the bottom feel that they can't make it without lawyers at their side. And sometimes, of course, they can't.

But I'd like to advocate a little judiciousness in our approach to the law as political movements.

First because, however inadvertently, "legalism" can serve to reinforce social characteristics that stifle rather than free people. It can add to people's sense that the problem is beyond them, something that can only be dealt with by experts. And it can call up the ever-ready impulse to rush off on one's own to file suit or whatever rather than reaching out to others to look for a common solution.

Secondly, courting the courts can fre-



scale of justice don't get tilted so drastically that we just slide right off.

Having said this, however, I have to go on to say that I'm beginning to get worried about the "legalization" (to redefine a term) of our society.

First, there is the growing tendency to look to the courts not just as social mediators between citizens, e.g. landlords and tenants, but as personal mediators between friends and relatives. This is best exemplified by the case of divorce. As more and more spouses fail to wait till death do part, divorces alone are creating an entire legal industry.

But that's not all. Now we also have live-in girlfriends suing for alimony and children suing their parents for not bringing them up properly and husbands suing their wives for failure to keep the house clean. The vengeful streak that all of us possess is increasingly finding its outlet in attempts to bring the entire weight of the law down on those who cross us.

Secondly, there is the intensification of the long-standing American tradition of seeking redress for pain and injury as a solitary individual embarked on a long and often tortuous journey through the land of lawsuits. These days personal injury suits are becoming the primary response—sometimes the only response—to the wrongs that big business visits upon the average citizen for everything ranging from defective lawn mowers to radiation contamination.

Take the recent revelations about the hazards of Rely tampons. I don't know just what I expected, particularly since Procter & Gamble did pull them off the market so quickly. But somehow it seemed disconcerting to have the major image

beamed into my living room be that of lawyers describing the million dollar lawsuits that would be filed by victims of toxic shock syndrome.

I guess I wanted angry women marching or major public hearings or inquiries into other brands (no one has yet paid much attention to the persistent rumors of asbestos in Tampax). Instead, it all appeared to be agreed upon. The few people with the "best cases" will be paid off and companies will continue to manufacture IUDs and birth control pills and tampons that make millions of women into human guinea pigs.

The final example I want to cite exists in the ranks of many progressive causes today. It is the tendency to rely on the courts—which frequently offer attention-getting tactical ploys—rather than concentrating on the nitty-gritty of organizing.

The issue of sexual harassment on the job may be a current case in point. Considerable public pressure—primarily through the media—is being directed toward getting the EEOC to issue guidelines regarding such behavior. A recent newspaper article announced their imminent publication and quoted a local lawyer as optimistically predicting a "litigation explosion" in their wake.

Women should, of course, have whatever tools it takes to maintain their jobs and their self-respect. But there's something about this gravitational pull toward the courthouse that strikes me as problematic—in this and other instances.

It represents the intersection of several disturbing elements in our society today.

Perhaps the most widespread of these is the mystification of knowledge. Everything is projected as being so com-

plex—or is made so complex—that the "layman" (or woman) can't grasp it without the help of the expert. I happen to be among those who believe in the necessity for specialists: some things *are* so complex that it would take a lot more time than this average person wants to spend before they could be grasped. But more and more there is a tendency to complicate things that could—and should—be simple.

The third—and perhaps most important—element is a feeling of powerlessness. Because people so often see themselves as isolated individuals, they find it hard to think of or effect collective solutions to the problems they face. And they tend to look for the small trade-off rather than any significant resolution. In this context, taking their concerns to a lawyer often appears as the only recourse.

Thus, a woman whose husband assaults her may seek a restraining order when economic circumstances make her feel she can't simply walk out on him. Or an injured worker will settle for a workers' comp payment because it seems so hard to get the company to correct the unsafe conditions that caused the accident.

One final factor in all this that can't be ignored is the increasing reliance on legal strategies among America's power elite—both in managing its fortunes and in managing its workforce.

What Robert Reich of the Federal Trade Commission has termed "paper entrepreneurship" has become the dominant aspect of corporate policy today. In essence, industry no longer concentrates on technological innovation, but on manipulation of assets through joint ventures, holding companies, etc. Law-

quently lead to putting organizing on the back burner while waiting for The Decision to resolve the problem.

Finally, I'm really not convinced that a "litigation explosion" is the most effective approach to many issues. I suspect that a good union local—initiated and led by concerned women—could do more to end sexual harassment at a workplace than a dozen court suits. And it could do a lot of other things as well. Like give women a sense of their own power and strengthen relationships among them and teach them new skills that would demystify even the law a little bit.

Maybe we should make the courts the court of last resort for a change.

Roberta Lynch is active in the New American Movement, a democratic socialist organization.

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# PERSPECTIVES

## Volunteers stayed away from the 1980 campaign

By Rick Ridder

IF PETER, PAUL AND MARY WERE STILL SINGING FOR POLITICAL causes, their refrain today might ask, "Where have all the volunteers gone?" Across the country, liberal candidates in the last election suffered acute shortages of donated labor.

A few years ago, a liberal candidate could rely on a cadre of dedicated volunteers to walk precincts, telephone voters, address envelopes, and generally perform the critical, if unglamorous, tasks of a campaign. But in recent years that has changed. As Joel Bradshaw, political organization director for Sen. Gary Hart's re-election campaign, put it, "The honeymoon is over. The masses of volunteers just aren't there any longer."

The decline in the number of volunteers is not a result of inadequate recruiting methods or a reflection of diminished need for recruits. Rather, it is a by-product of political and social changes that have influenced traditional volunteer groups and their motivation to volunteer.

First, the large number of women entering the work force has drastically reduced the availability of daytime volunteers. In the past, women would come in to work at the headquarters while their children were at school. Today, many of those politically active women have paying jobs and their contribution to a campaign may be a one-night-a-week shift at

the phone bank—if their husbands stay home with the children. (During the fall, Monday nights are a popular political evening for many women; their husbands are home with the children, Howard Cozell, Dandy Don and Frank Gifford.)

Right-wing Republican candidates have not been struck by this dearth of volunteers. As one Republican organizer remarked, "Hey, our supporters still believe a woman's place is either at home or at the Republican headquarters."

Second, students who were once the foot soldiers of the political left are inactive. When Gary Hart spoke recently at Colorado State University, more than 800 students attended. On each seat was a volunteer card to be completed and returned after the speech. Three were returned.

Some students are simply not interest-

ed. A canvass for the U.S. Senate race of 100 registered voters in a University of Colorado dormitory found five voters supporting the Democratic candidate, one voter supporting the Republican candidate and 94 undecided. The canvass was made four days before the election. But on election day there was a 90 percent turnout from that same dormitory.

The lack of involvement by students can be explained, in part, by the current economic situation. Many students who otherwise might volunteer are working part-time to pay for their education; student employment is far higher today than it was 10 years ago.

But the lack of a cause over the past five years has also been instrumental in lowering the number of student volunteers. There has been no Vietnam or Watergate to motivate active involvement. There is not much that the average citizen can do to assure the safe return of the hostages. A fresh face in politics, or

stamp money.

The candidates themselves fear that one of these small committees may not file accurate or punctual reports, thus causing embarrassment to the candidate. Consequently, fund-raising generally is handled by the central headquarters, which maintains the needed reporting apparatus. All funds raised on the local level are sent to the central committee to be reported, eliminating the need for a local treasurer and local filing.

There is no guarantee—indeed it is unlikely—that locally raised funds will be earmarked for that locality. The funds all enter a central account and disbursements are made at the discretion of the central campaign. Local projects that are not part of the central campaign's plan are rare because of lack of funding.

Volunteers resist this centralization because they do not feel that the campaign is interested in their local projects or their local interests. Additionally, the



Volunteers for political campaigns became scarce during the last election.

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emotion that will bring out volunteers. John Anderson at first was able to attract volunteers, but his supply dwindled as his political fortunes lagged.

This decline in volunteers, coupled with the deterioration of the political party machinery, has created staffing difficulties in the field. The party organizations once could have funneled party precinct workers to assist in campaigns. But now there is little rapport between local party leaders and their precinct workers. Too often, now, the names on a precinct worker's list are simply those people who can be cajoled into holding a precinct caucus once every two years. Their commitment does not extend further.

The by-product of this volunteer shortage is a movement toward centralization of campaign activities. Central headquarters now plots the media ads that attempt to supplant the impact previously made by volunteers. The volunteers of the past have been replaced by the David Garths of today.

Accelerating this centralization are the campaign funding laws. The laws require that each campaign fund-raising unit maintain a committee with a treasurer, who files regular contributor reports. This can be burdensome for a local committee whose storefront fund-raising efforts are related largely to the need for

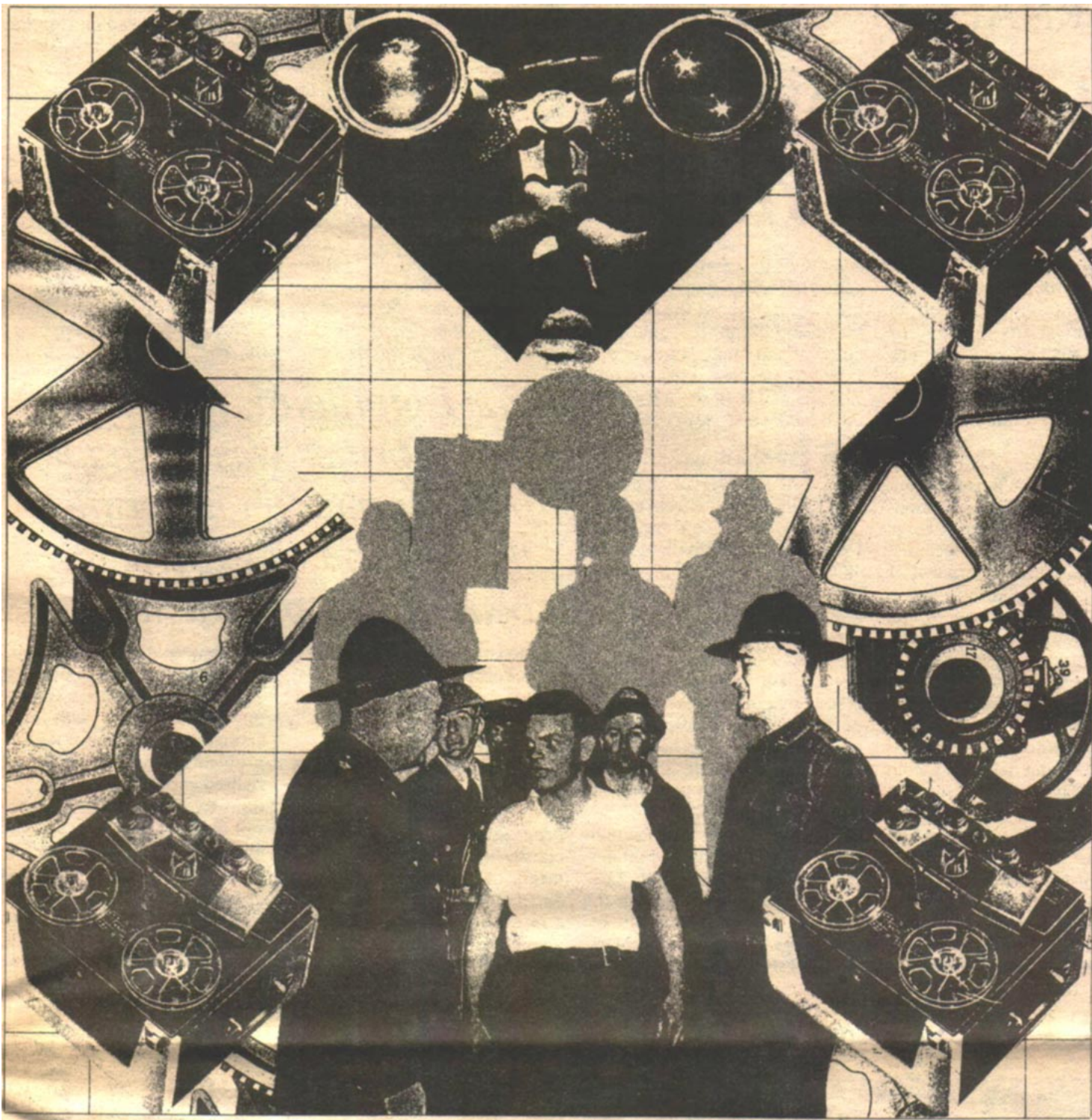
convinced many long-time volunteers and local party leaders that the campaign does not want their advice or input. Local experts previously provided the grist on which the local campaign strategy was based. Now computers that analyze past performance and extensive polling that details a candidate's weaknesses and strengths instruct the central headquarters on where to place the campaign resources and what areas to target.

In the early '70s, the key phrase in political organizing was "number of voter contacts." In the '80s, it is "targeting." When volunteers were available to assure that all voters were familiar with the candidate's positions, quantity of voter contact was paramount. Now, without the volunteer, it has become imperative that available resources are expended familiarizing and persuading those swing groups, such as ticket-splitters, who may be "soft" in their support of either candidate.

The person-to-person campaign still exists, but only for those small groups that are perceived as pivotal. In place of a Tammany Hall approach of attempting to contact and accommodate all, we have the politics of catering to a few. ■

Rick Ridder worked as a field organizer for Sen. Gary Hart's re-election campaign.





## Shopfloor spy confesses

By Kenny Thomas

**W**HEN CALVIN BENJAMIN applied to work for Guardsmark, Inc., he didn't know he was going to be a double agent.

But then, he didn't know he was going to spy on union organizers, either.

Benjamin, 30, had been unemployed for seven months when he answered a help-wanted ad for investigators for the Mark Lipman Division of Guardsmark, a Memphis based security firm. The job description said extensive traveling was involved, and Benjamin saw this as an opportunity to look outside of Memphis for jobs in his field, land development planning. "It really didn't matter what the job was, as long as I got to travel," he said.

First he had to go through a battery of interviews, lie detector tests and training films that lasted four days. "They wanted me to prove I'd been unemployed, and I had to get a notarized statement to that effect. They were afraid I might be spying on them," he told *In These Times*.

Though Guardsmark may have been worried about the government spying on its operations, it was apparently not worried about union spies. His interviewers never asked Benjamin what he thought about unions, even though they were going to send him to spy on one.

Not knowing Benjamin thinks unions are a good idea, Guardsmark sent him to Medina, Ohio, to work for Donn Products. His assignment: to get close to three union "suspects," and "burn them any way I could," as Benjamin put it. If he could connect any of the three with drugs or stealing from the plant, Guardsmark

said it would give him money to buy drugs or supply him with arresting officers.

"Before I went I had a long talk with my wife about it," Benjamin said. "Finally I decided that if I didn't do it, someone else would, and it wouldn't be someone who would expose it."

Once he arrived in Ohio he had to get hired at the Donn plant, which wasn't as easy as it was supposed to be. He reported to Donn's Westlake plant on a Monday, where he was scheduled to meet chief of personnel Jim Bailey. Bailey wasn't there, however, and the secretary did not know whether she should hire Benjamin, as Bailey had not left any instructions to that effect. That afternoon Benjamin called Guardsmark and told them what happened.

When he went back Tuesday, the secretary had gotten a note to hire him, but it didn't say what his position or his salary was to be. "Another one of Jim Bailey's stupid tricks," she muttered, and Benjamin duly put this in his next report to Guardsmark.

Benjamin sent Guardsmark daily written reports and telephoned in a weekly report. "I was supposed to report on how many people were wearing union shirts, on people complaining about the pay, how people felt about the plant, even people's facial reactions to their pay checks," he told *In These Times*. Moreover, to hide what he was really doing if someone discovered his spy mission, his supervisor, Mike Clark, told Benjamin to alter his reports. "Whenever I talked about union activity, I had to put parentheses around it, so they could turn it in to two separate reports," he explained. "That way, if my reports were subpoenaed, they could just turn over what I said

about drugs and stealing."

But Benjamin's main assignment was not drugs or stealing; it was to pin the accusation of drug usage or theft on his three "suspects." He made a practice of introducing himself to anyone wearing a union t-shirt, and this eventually led Benjamin to Jerry Wasik, an organizer for the United Furniture Workers of America (UFWA) and one of his three "suspects."

### Warning.

He told Wasik he had to meet with him, and that it was urgent. They set up a

*Calvin Benjamin was hired to spy on the union, but ended up spying on the corporation that hired him.*

meeting at McDonald's because Benjamin was afraid he might be spied on. Benjamin took his notes with him, and Wasik saw his name in them, just as Benjamin was about to tell him he'd been hired as a spy. "What's my name doing there?" he asked, and I told him I was there to nail him," related Benjamin. He also warned Wasik about drugs and stealing.

After the initial contact, Benjamin says he was "frightened" because "I didn't know Jerry Wasik from Joe Blow and I had no way of knowing if he'd tell everyone, 'Hey, we've got a spy.'" But Wasik kept it quiet and sent for his supervisor, Jimmy Tylo. They had Benjamin make two statements, one tape-recorded, the other written, signed and notarized. Then they asked him to work as a double agent.

"From that point on I copied daily reports and we taped the phone reports," said Benjamin. "And the union gave me false information to put in my reports." One thing they used false information for was to find out if there was a spy at the Westlake plant. "In one of my telephone reports, I told them I'd been to a union meeting and most of the people there were from Westlake. I said I probably could do them more good if I transferred there, but they said, 'We've already got a spy there,'" Benjamin explained.

This was one of the many conversations the union taped during the month of September, and is included in the evidence the UFWA will present in its complaint against Donn with the National Labor Relations Board. In addition, the three "suspects," the AFL-CIO, the UFWA, and two federal agencies are filing suit against Donn and Guardsmark. Benjamin says he understands he will also be asked to testify before the U.S. Senate sometime in the future.

### Surfacing.

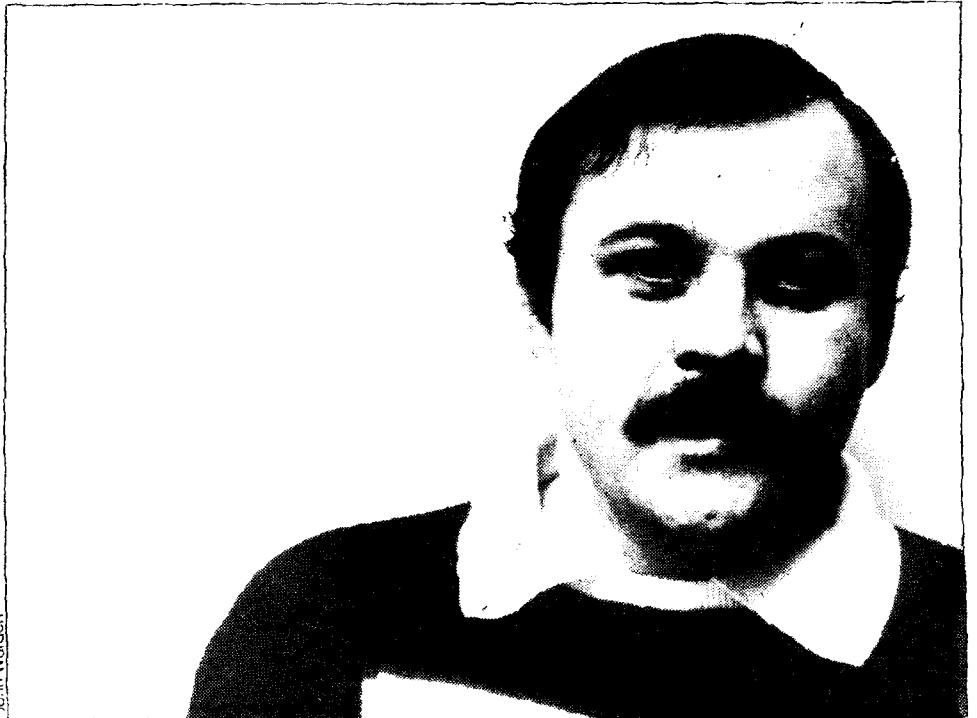
After a little over a month as a double agent, the situation became untenable. People became suspicious, since he had said he was a student there for the summer, and all the real students had gone back to school. Furthermore, his co-workers wondered how he could afford to live in a motel on his \$100 a week take-home pay. He told Wasik, "Something's going to happen, someone's going to get hurt." The union wanted him to stay until October, though, and Wasik reassured the more "militaristic" union members that Benjamin was okay.

In the middle of the night on Sept. 28, the union told Benjamin to move out of his motel room because they thought he was being watched. The next day, they went over his story one last time, and Tuesday, Sept. 30, they held a press conference at which Benjamin "surfaced."

Now Benjamin is back in Memphis and once again looking for a job in land development planning. He says he's glad he did what he did—even though most of his family disapproves—because he knows how important unions are for their members, and because he feels employees have little defense against industrial spying.

"I don't believe there's any real protection for the workers, except a union," he says.

*Kenny Thomas is a Memphis writer.*





## INPRINT

## JOURNALISM

# The drift and mastery of a political columnist

Walter Lippmann and the American Century  
By Ronald Steel  
Little, Brown & Co.

By James B. Gilbert

The long public career of Walter Lippmann is unique in modern American journalism and politics. Advisor to six presidents, from Woodrow Wilson to Lyndon Johnson, Lippmann occupied a curious position close but still peripheral to political power. Influencing decisions, presidential appointments, and international treaties, he never had to take the responsibility for his advice or live with the consequence of decisions. Creator of the modern political column, Lippmann helped to shape the modern Op Ed page that is now a feature of most newspapers. His column, "Today and Tomorrow," reprinted in hundreds of local newspapers, became a focus of national journalism.

Lippmann was born into a wealthy upper east-side German Jewish family at the end of the

19th century, insulated from the misery and deprivation of the new wave of Eastern European Jewish immigrants that poured into New York City at that time—indeed, he never had much sympathy for them or for other racial or ethnic minorities. Entering Harvard in 1906, he attended what then was the most exciting university in the nation. His teachers included philosophers William James and George Santayana. Classmates included John Reed—future journalist of the Russian Revolution—and a brilliant group of young writers and critics. Despite snubs from anti-Semitic classmates, Lippmann became a writer and a confidant to his professors. He also dabbled in socialism becoming on his graduation an assistant to the muckraking writer Lincoln Steffens. Shortly thereafter, he published two widely noted books, *A Preface to Politics* and *Drift and Mastery*. Both were written in his fluent style, both drew on current psychological and historical theories, and both were despaired with the process

and results of representative democracy. By 1914, Lippmann had become an editor of the *New Republic* and began writing his column, "Today and Tomorrow," first for the *New York Herald Tribune* and then for the *Washington Post and Newsweek*.

## Low expectations.

Such a figure deserves investigation, and Ronald Steel, author of several books on American foreign policy, in his biography *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* provides an extensive record of Lippmann's later career and personal life. The picture that emerges is that of an upper class liberal growing increasingly conservative as he experienced one political disappointment after another: a man whose low expectations for democratic government seemed confirmed by events.

Steel also presents a man whose predilections and attachments often led him astray. Loving power and a box seat in the political theater, Lippmann often found it possible to applaud

governments in power, until, as it usually happened, he broke with a president over a key misdeed. Lovingly courted by the Johnson administration, he nonetheless broke with it over the Vietnam war and took flight into the camp of the doves. This, Steel argues, was the worst of times, but in some ways Lippmann's finest hour.

Lippmann's record on civil liberties also suffered from support of the status quo. Not a strenuous advocate of free speech, he worried little about the First Amendment during his lifetime: During World War II he supported the internment of Japanese Americans and did nothing to mobilize public opinion against the Nazi death camps. Later, he supported civil rights, but without much enthusiasm.

shared opinions of an expert political and intellectual elite—and bring it to bear upon the presidency. In pursuing this task, Lippmann helped build a political coterie of experts, lawyers, writers and politicians who shared power and influence over several presidential administrations. Steel provides much of the material to see this political subculture growing up in New York and Washington, but he does not focus on it.

Although Steel does not acknowledge it, Lippmann's biography reveals the paucity of ideas and commitments of progressive liberalism. While progressive liberals sought to understand the mechanisms of power, they developed bureaucratic programs and pragmatic answers to the challenges of the age, but

*For Lippmann, the task of the reformer was to shape public opinion and bring the opinion of experts to bear on the presidency.*

## Progressive liberalism.

There is much in this book of interest, but what is missing is a deeper analysis of just who Lippmann was and what his career reveals. Lippmann represented a particular branch of patrician progressivism that looked suspiciously upon democracy as the means of implementing change. As Lippmann saw it, his task as a reformer was to shape public opinion—in his case meaning the

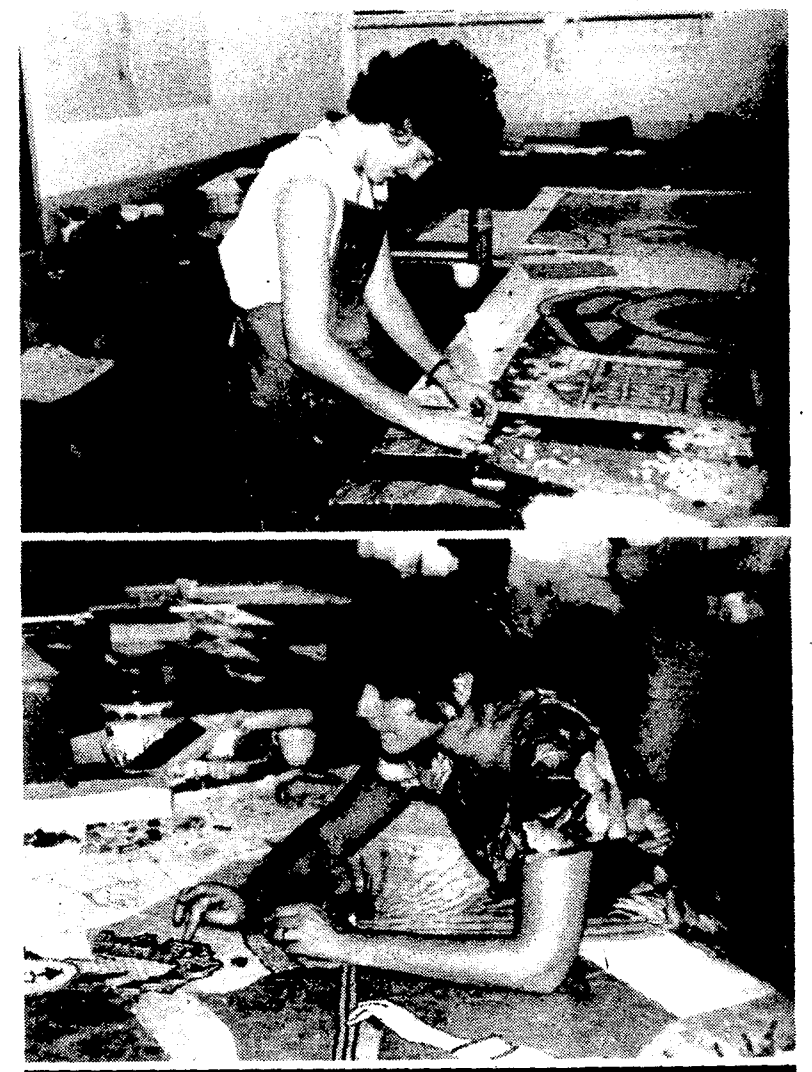
they lacked a conception of the good society—the end result of power. Lippmann was astute enough to see many of society's problems, but was never far-sighted enough to look for solutions to those problems. The result was a brilliant career, edged always with hesitations and discouragements.

James B. Gilbert is professor of history at the University of Maryland.

## Mural reflects on the Jewish immigrant experience



Miriam Socoloff (bottom) and Cynthia Weiss (top), two Chicago artists, designed and built this mural representing the American Jewish immigrant experience (lower portion) and Jewish activism in the trade union movement during the early 1900s (upper portion). The mural, completed in November, forms one wall at the Jewish Community Center in West Rogers Park, Chicago. Photos are provided by Debbie Zucker.







## HISTORY

# Giving up empire isn't easy

**Empire As a Way of Life**  
By William Appleman Williams  
Oxford, 226 pp., \$14.95

By Phillip Johnson

As a typically cynical '60s radical, with a typically melodramatic world view, I was partial to the American-history-as-decline-and-fall-of-Rome-Part-II motif then popular in New Left rhetoric. The parallels seemed almost inescapable: the imperial legions embattled at the far-flung borders of the over-extended empire, the population at home torn by dissent and abandoned to revels, more vigorously primitive cultures at the gates. "America is the only country in history to go from barbarism to decadence without an intervening stage of civilization," we sneered.

The evidence for this theory has increased in recent years. America's inability to acknowledge, let alone cope with, the realities underlying OPEC, ayatollahs and Afghanistan looks disturbingly like the death throes of that first Republic. The Me Decade took on all the trappings of terminal decadence. Indeed, old student-radical hyperbole has begun to seep into the speeches of right-wing politicians and the columns of conservative pundits, albeit with a reverse twist. The rhetoric of the Committee on the Present Danger declares that we must re-arm to restore the Pax Americana or go the way of ancient Rome.

But a somewhat older, slightly less cynical radical cannot regard impending decline and fall with the old enthusiasm. Being ravaged and run through by triumphant barbarians was no fun for the participants the first time around, and the ensuing Dark Ages had a distinctly deleterious effect on quality of life for some centuries. A new Dark Age, in which the principalities and corporate fiefdoms are armed with nuclear bombs, laser beams and biological weapons, is not a welcome vision.

Possibly another metaphor can be found, one that can provide for the overthrow of American interventionism and economic imperialism but not require the

society to commit cultural suicide. What if America isn't declining into a vicious senility, but is instead stumbling through an inordinately clumsy, bullying adolescence? Is there a chance that we can outgrow the "grow or die" imperative that has driven our military adventures and fueled our Manichean concept of global confrontation with the Soviet Union?

This alternative metaphor is vivified and given firm historical underpinnings by William Apple-

*The basis for an American empire was laid in the Constitution.*



man Williams in his book-length essay, *Empire As a Way of Life*. "We must leave that imperial incubator if we are to become citizens of the real world," Williams writes, but his own first task is not to argue us out of imperial adolescence, but simply to convince us that we are an empire, so that for the first time we can face our historical nature and future options squarely and maturely.

Williams, currently the president of the Organization of American Historians, is a radical in the true sense; he attempts to pursue our historical dilemma to its roots. The constant burden of his landmark studies such as *The Contours of American History* has been an effort to strip away all the nonsense and delusion and confront us with the real forces and interests that created American history. Williams has always

demonstrated the true activist historian's faith that a clear-eyed understanding of our past will enable us to direct a clearer vision forward.

*Empire as a Way of Life* is anything but an academic study. It is instead a highly personal statement from the heart. The author draws upon his lifetime's study, but the tone is that of a blunt address to his fellow citizens. Williams sounds at times like a kindly but somewhat gruff schoolmaster, trying to drum a lesson in life's realities into a group of dense and erring students.

Complaints about *Empire* center on its idiosyncratic tone. Williams' style in this essay is not only personal—it is at times downright quirky. Although he is capable of something close to eloquence, Williams' writing here seems almost slapdash. It is peppered with loose interpretations and incomplete sentences that mar the work.

## Reality and empire.

The basic thrust of *Empire as a Way of Life* is contained in the title. Empire, Williams argues, is a deeply rooted cultural assumption, which structures the "reality" our society is capable of addressing—empire as a way of life precedes imperial status. At the core of this cultural assumption is the idea that constant growth is essential for the maintenance of freedom. This leads to a national syllogism that has dictated our political decisions for two centuries: growth is necessary for freedom; empire is necessary for growth, therefore empire is necessary for freedom. The paradoxical flipside of this conclusion—that we must invade the freedom of others to preserve our own—is the contradiction that troubles us in Iran, El Salvador, South Korea and all around the globe.

American certainly did not invent empire. But America did invent a unique set of rationalizations. Our notion of ourselves as unique, as a City on a Hill, gave the mission to remake the world in our image a messianic fervor with the doctrine of "manifest destiny," then insisted on rights to unlimited trade throughout the world and access to the resources

of others with the "open door" policy. Our history, viewed in this light, is a long struggle to shape the world into the ideal market for the surplus of our ever-growing economy. This is an empire built through political and economic influence rather than outright colonialization, a situation that has allowed us to hide from the reality of our imperial status.

Consequently, the costs of empire have gone unperceived. Viewing our history in Williams' light illuminates a host of contemporary problems. Williams contends that strong, centralized government was designed into the Constitution to promote empire, centralization enabled Roosevelt to create a permanent pact be-

tween government and the corporations, which laid the groundwork for the current "reindustrialization" strategies. Imperialism was also responsible for the destruction of society's rural base, as agriculture became merely an extension of a metropolitan economy: "It was essential to bind the city and the country together in one metropolis that would then function as the center of a hemispheric—even global—empire for freedom and prosperity."

But the gravest cost, Williams argues, is the loss of imagination. Empire as a way of life has so structured our civilization that we have failed even to imagine alternatives. "The cost of empire is not properly tabulated in the dead and maimed, or in the wasted resources, but rather in the loss of our vitality as citizens."

## Growing up.

Our current predicament is that we are trapped by our unwillingness to face our imperial way of life. We can't see the "energy crisis" for what it is, we can't see Soviet policy for what it is, we can't see popular revolutions for what they are because we still have our imperial blinders on. There is every danger that we will destroy our country and much of civilization with it before we grow up and learn to deal with the outside world.

And yet, could we only acknowledge and learn from our imperial past and present, the future would suddenly be thrown open to our imaginations. There are wide-ranging, challenging alternatives available for altering our economy, changing our relationship to our resource base and interacting creatively with other nations as soon as we are willing to change our way of life.

Williams doesn't begin to suggest where to go from here. He merely insists that as a precondition we must understand our imperial assumptions. He wrote the book, he says, "to encourage a searching dialogue about the character of our culture." May that dialogue come soon. It would be like coming of age. ■ *Phillip Johnson is an Oregon journalist.*

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## ART «» ENTERTAINMENT

## MUSIC

## Japanese pop hits U.S.

By Bruce Dancis

Japan and rock and roll seldom come together in the same thought for Westerners unless an ex-Beatle gets busted at a Tokyo airport or some Japanese Marie Osmond clones known as Pink Lady appear mysteriously on American network TV and then just as mysteriously disappear when the Nielsen ratings come out. Yet Japanese rock is big and getting bigger, pushed by a numerous and affluent youth population and burgeoning recording and musical instrument manufacturing industries.

But for the most part, our ignorance has not been our loss, since Japanese rock bands tend toward the blandest and most sugar-coated pop to be found anywhere. However, a band formed in 1978 known as Yellow Magic Orchestra—or YMO to its fans—is making a serious effort to challenge this state of affairs. The group's recent U.S. appearances, a well planned multi-media tour of San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Boston and Philadelphia, gave American audiences an opportunity to see the cutting edge of rock in Japan.

Inevitably, one is first struck by YMO's sense of humor, for this so-called "orchestra" is actually made up of just three people: Haruomi Hosono, a leading Japanese record producer; Yukihiro Takahashi, a well known rock drummer; and Ryuichi Sakamoto, a classically trained keyboardist who has been an assistant professor of music at a major Japanese university. And the cover of the group's recently released U.S. album, *Xoo Multiplies* (A&M Records), plays with the Western stereotype of the "yellow horde" by reproducing facsimiles of the three protagonists so that there are scores of people in one great mass—all with the faces of Hosono, Takahashi and Sakamoto.

YMO has achieved a Beatlesque degree of commercial success in Japan, this spring scoring four Top 20 hits simultaneously. And the reasons for this popularity seem to be based on les-

sons learned from the Beatles: YMO makes well constructed, irresistibly tuneful pop songs that can appeal to a broad audience, while at the same time containing some critical insights.

YMO calls their music "Technopops," an accurate description for their synthesizer-dominated sound that uses both New Wave and disco beats, hi-tech production (key influences are Brian Eno, the former Roxy Music synthesist who has collaborated with David Bowie and Talking Heads, and Giorgio Moroder, the producer behind Donna Summer), as well as elements of funk, early '60s instrumental rock (the Ventures), and indigenous Japanese music.

Many of the band's songs are instrumentals with sweeping, warm-bodied melodies, given extra richness by the numerous synthesizers that are used on each track. The upbeat rhythms, on both drums and synthetic percussion, bounce with a sort of robotoid sprightliness. When this gets added to humorous quotations from old Marlboro jingles ("Multiplies") and whooshing, vacuum-cleaner versions of classics like the Beatles' "Day Tripper," it is difficult not to be taken with YMO's ingeniousness. (Unfortunately, the album does not include YMO's version of Archie Bell and the Drells' "Tighten Up.")

The mode of presentation and their politics further distinguish YMO. Unlike most Japanese rock groups, YMO sings in English; more precisely, their lyrics appear to be in English, but are electronically altered in such a manner that they are rendered nearly unrecognizable.

The one exception to this, "Citizens of Science," sets a much more sinister tone than the other songs on the album, which, since they are largely light-sounding instrumentals, seem to be more of a commentary on technopolis than a critique. On top of a hard-driving New Wave beat, a man's voice with a British accent sings various disjointed phrases: "stand alone in empty rooms...never give you time of day...drinking hard stuff...citizens of science are silent...citizens of science

still smile if they know what's good for them." By most Western New Wave standards of protest and outrage, this is pretty mild stuff, but in the context of Japanese rock it remains distinctively bold.

Of additional interest is YMO's reception by American rock audiences. In San Francisco their concert was produced by Bill Graham, the Bay Area's biggest promoter, but in a little-used (for rock) hall in the city's Japantown. The event received a rave preview article in San Francisco's Japanese/American English language daily and, unique for any major rock show that I'm aware of, drew a sell-out audience of whom a majority were either Japanese-Americans or tourists or students from Japan. New Wave fashions predominated.

Playing in front of a huge checkerboard-patterned backdrop of lights, which were able to move in several directions in time with the music, and a prodigious panel of electronic circuitry, YMO's three members were joined onstage by three additional musicians. All wore red armbands. Their lengthy set had been preceded by a short film that used experimental and animated techniques to display icons as disparate as golden cranes, a Japanese symbol of luck and long life, and a Space Invaders game.

Although YMO's show never grew boring, their austere and somewhat cold performance failed to generate much crowd reaction until the very end. This resulted in part from the unfamiliarity of YMO's songs, but the band's unwillingness to acknowledge applause also contributed to the lack of response.

Still, based on their music rather than their presentation, YMO deserves attention. Their sound cuts across styles and territorial borders with a creative flair, and there's no reason why the band's albums shouldn't be well received in at least the U.S. and Great Britain by the international skinny tie set.

(Thanks to John Spayde for his help.)

Bruce Dancis is a rock journalist in San Francisco.

## Japan's English sales pitch

By Jon Spayde

The Japanese poet, scenarist and popular-culture critic Taeko Tomioka opens a recent essay with some sharp, nervous observations about the use of English in Japan:

"I have sometimes suddenly felt, while ordering *Sebun Suta* (Seven Star) cigarettes in a tobacco shop, that *this is America*. I have felt the same buying a magazine at one of those stands, run by the Railroad Employees' Relief Association, which we have come to call *kiosuko* (kiosks), or asking for a *guriin* (green) ticket for the Bullet Train

## English lingo creeps into common usage in Japan.

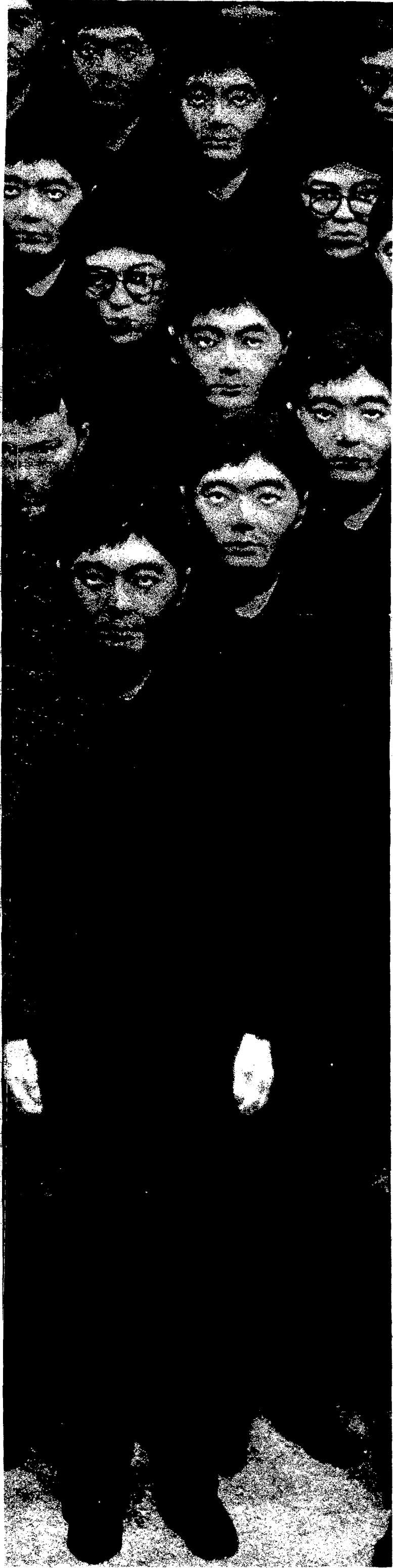
...When I shop for clothes they tell me that the *esunikku* (ethnic) look is the thing this year, so I really ought to go for a *ruusu* (loose) *shiruetto* (silhouette)... On the government network there is a program called "Is It Really True?" in which the con-

testants, who sit in chairs colored red, green, yellow and blue, are referred to as '*reddo seat*,' '*guriin seat*,' '*iero seat*' and '*buruu seat*'...We are invited to seek out the beauties of our antiquity and our landscape by the foreign catchphrase *Deisukabaa Jyapan* ('Discover Japan')."

"I can't help the hallucination that I live in one of the American states," she concludes, "one that happens to be called Japan."

Anybody who has been to Tokyo can vouch for the overall accuracy of Tomioka's picture: pieces of English popping up everywhere the eye can look or the ear attend. The B side of the

Continued on facing page



YMO's album cover features multiples of the band's three members.



Continued from facing page

Yellow Magic Orchestra's *Solid State Survivor* album is all in English, English sung into a synthesizer. A magazine ad for the new Pentax Auto 110 mini-camera depicts, in standard surreal Japanese advertising style, a strange young man made up like Frankenstein's monster and dressed in a madras shirt and a denim jacket. Standing beside him in the front seat of a canary-yellow dune buggy is his sugar-and-spice sweetheart, all flounces and crinolines. Both are holding Auto 110s. Behind them in the buggy, a mammoth inflated red-vinyl Valentine heart six times their size. "Pentax," say the hot-pink characters above their heads, "Ayo mo renzu de kissu suru." ("Today—Kiss her with the lens again.") Lower right, right above a shot of the sober face of the little camera, in hotter pink and vibrant big Roman letters: "Kiss'n." Above that, a fine-print text in good Japanese explains the metaphor and the camera.

English is everywhere, transliterated into Japanese script or spelled out in ABC's, heavily accented or pronounced carefully for TV by Orson Welles and Jack Nicklaus. One or two words at a time: "Kiss'n," "Big Sneaker," "Beautiful Hobby Life." Still, Tomioka's suggestion of linguistic colonialism can mislead us. Anglophone imperialism did not rule Japan, at least not until the MacArthur shogunate, and even the Occupation did not create a bilingual culture, self-divided, like those of India, the Philippines, or Hong Kong.

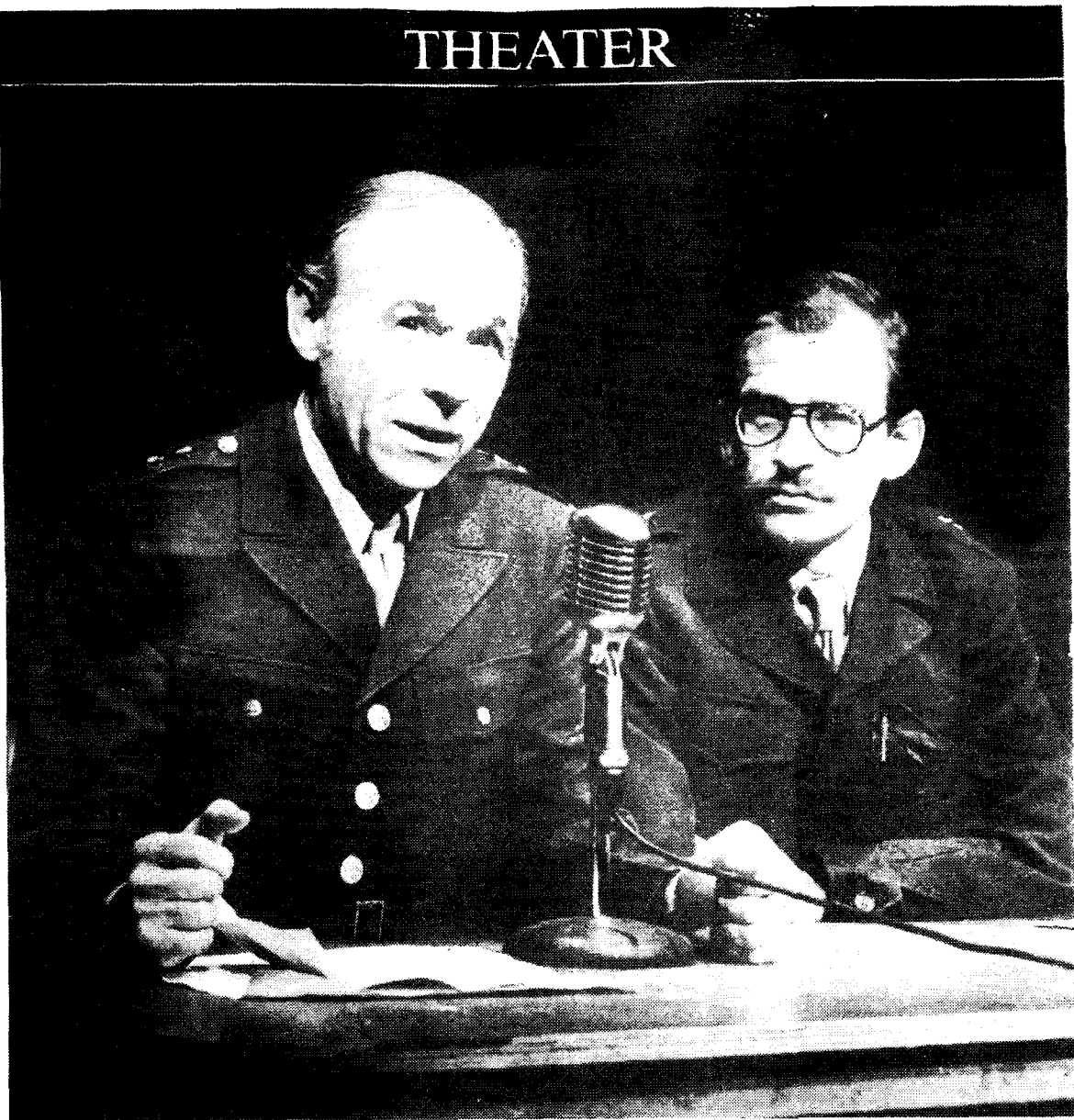
Postwar educational policy prescribed six years of English for every child, but this always has been grammar instruction by the numbers, aimed not at fluency but rather at the tricky questions on the university entrance examinations.

This is not to say that the impact of English on Japan has been superficial. The boom years between World War I and the Manchurian adventure of 1931, in particular, saw the wholesale introduction of neologisms; some were the names of imported objects, like *rajio* (radio) and *painappuru* (pineapple), and were free native variations on English originals, like the acronym *moga* (for *modan garu*, a "modern girl," a Tokyo flapper.) *Moga* has vanished, but hundreds of others have put down roots, and most people are little more aware of the foreignness of some of them than we are of the Japanese origin of "tycoon" and "typhoon."

What Tomioka is talking about is a large and ever-shifting body of words for which there are perfectly good Japanese equivalents. Here English offers an unsystematic, intermittent, endlessly surprising alternative vocabulary, controlled by broadcasters, record companies and Dentsu, the world's largest and wealthiest advertising agency. The fact that it does not organize itself into an alternative *syn-tax*, into the systematic use of English, protects both Japanese parochialism and the interests of the advertisers. Popular English in Japan is a consumer product rather than a tool; it has little use-value but a lot of *giamor*.

The persuaders at Dentsu can use English in a unique, economical Japanese way. The formulas and techniques themselves are the real international language, however, and in this sense Japan is an American state, and all of us live in Tokyo, too. ■ *John Spavde is a translator and student of Japanese literature.*

## THEATER



# Play on bomb booms

By Joel Schechter

If fantasies and fears of widespread nuclear disaster weigh especially heavily on us these days it may be because of government sponsored air raid drills in the '50s, when schoolchildren were instructed to hide under their desks in case of nuclear attack. There is, of course, danger of nuclear war. There are also childhood memories and adult fantasies of that apocalypse. Some of these are explored in *Dead End Kids: A History of Nuclear Power*, currently being performed by the Mabou Mines theater ensemble at New York's Public Theater.

The dead end kids of the play's title are scientists and army generals, not schoolchildren. Their dialogue never mentions gradeschool air raid drills, but on stage we see about 20 tiny wooden chairs, the type usually found behind gradeschool desks. Adult actors sit on these chairs throughout the performance, as if their childhood is perpetually with them, while they watch a cub scout construct an atom bomb and hear Pentagon generals report on the first nuclear test in New Mexico.

The incongruous presence of the children's chairs is one of the surreal visual images created in *Dead End Kids*. Conceived and directed by Joanne Akalaitis, the play offers a history of nuclear science's subconscious. It is a dreamlike juxtaposition of legends and facts, beginning with medieval alchemy and ending with a stand-up comedian's obscene jokes about a radioactive chicken. The presentation is neither strictly chronological nor logical, but then nuclear power is not a logical development either. While nuclear weapons can be regarded as deterrents and sources of corporate profit, their proliferation requires more than logical analysis: one turns to the psychoanalytical theories of Reich, Freud and Jung, or

the apocalyptic poetry of Artaud for supplementary information on the secret fears of scientists and generals who promote the end of the world.

Midway through *Dead End Kids*, a 25-year-old Atomic Energy Commission film on nuclear research is projected onstage. The film's colors are faded, its pious message about the need to defend democracy through science is simple enough for school-

children to absorb, and its depiction of soldiers on nuclear bomb test sites is frightening because we know now, decades after the film was made, what these tests did to the participants. Functioning as a "found object" artwork, the naive propaganda film suggests just how little science may know about the weaponry it creates. This continuing ignorance has given rise to curious, sometimes comic fantasies that

George Bartenieff and David Brisbin (above) and Ellen McElduff and Greg Mehrtlen (below) discuss history of nuclear power in the Mabou Mines production of *DEAD END KIDS*.



Mabou Mines enacts. When a bomb blast is simulated onstage, complete with sense-surround sound effects and a tiny film showing exploding houses, the scientists in the play put on suntan lotion to protect their faces from burns. Their naive response is based on historical fact: it was Dr. Edward Teller who passed around Army issue suntan lotion at the first atomic bomb test in Alamogordo, New Mexico.

Searching past history and literature for such collisions between science and delusion, Mabou Mines turns to Goethe's *Faust* and performs a surreal parody of Faust's pact with Mephistopheles. The pact is signed at a conference table, with American army generals standing behind the signatories. Faust signs with six different ballpoint pens, and gives one to each of his guests.

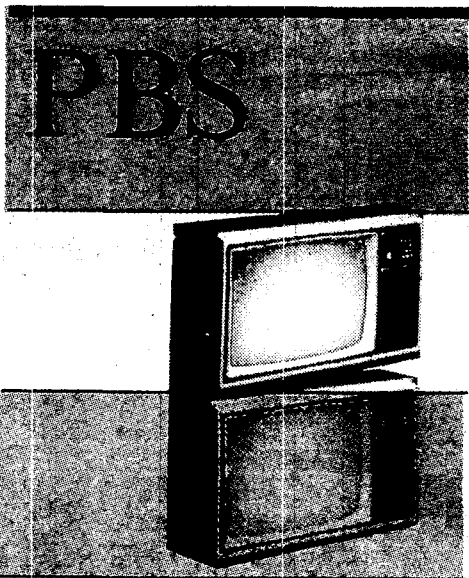
The Faustian urge to power may have another, less poetic counterpart in the psyche of Pentagon generals. Mabou Mines intimates that bomb building reinforces patriarchy and sexism. At a Pentagon press conference, General L.R. Groves reports on the Alamogordo, N.M., bomb test, a group of adjunct officers and orderlies playing poker laugh at all the sexual innuendoes buried in Gen. Groves' rhetoric. Their leers about the erection of the test site contrast sharply with the silent, subversive pose of the General's female secretary. When Groves finishes speaking, he and the others sing a wacky, sadistic song about the great times GIs had after blasting Japan. This swing number, "Hubba, Hubba," performed by the four sergeants, is sung and danced with 1940s choreography in which the men lift the army secretary aloft as if she is a goddess in khaki. It is too easy, perhaps to conclude from this scene that nuclear power, like the military hierarchy, is a perverse expression of male chauvinism, elevating women and waging war primarily to flatter male egos, but *Dead End Kids* hints at such connections with wit and subtlety.

The stand-up comedy routine toward the end of the evening further links male sexual fantasies to fantasies of power. In the comedy routine, a foul-mouthed, right-wing entertainer insults women, blacks and poultry with what he regards as comic one-liners about nuclear fallout. He takes perverse pleasure in embarrassing the audience, imagining the inferiority and discomfort of others, including radioactive chickens. Fallout merely provides another excuse for his dirty jokes, and confirm his own sense of superiority. He concludes this parody of right-wing stand-up comedy by offering the audience Ronald Reagan's election-night wish: "I hope you all sleep well tonight." Of such stuff nightmares are made.

In the past, Mabou Mines has based its performances on material like Beckett's *The Lost Ones* and *Play*. For these works, the ensemble was recognized as a fashionably avant-garde group that excelled in visual imagery and narrative techniques. In *Dead End Kids* Mabou Mines tends to offer elaborate spectacle for its own sake at times. Cynics may dismiss the group's new concern with nuclear power as one more adjustment to fashion and the current "apocalyptic mood," but the group's stage imagery of disaster and its dreamers is vivid and provocative. ■

Joel Schechter teaches at Yale School of Drama.





often-made false claim to "cultural democracy" on the airwaves. As he said then, "The half [of citizens tuned in to peak prime time] that is watching may be called the audience but it is both halves that make up the public."

It's unlikely that public TV planners will plan for the public rather than the audience. In the strenuous debate about new directions for a public TV in a bleak economy, there are two types of executives: those who reluctantly embrace commercialization, and those who welcome it. PBS official David Davis, a man in charge of seeking out the "vigorous and imaginative marketing of our programs and services" that Grossman has mandated, broods over the hazards. "I've wrestled with my own conscience at length about this," he told Doug Hill in *Panorama* magazine. "I'm convinced we can do it. The alternative is to curl up

and die."

Then there's self-described "born again capitalist" Robert Chitester, the mastermind behind WQLN's (Erie, Pa.) plans to produce and distribute a host of conservative programs pioneered by *Free to Choose*. He plans for WQLN to be totally free of government funds by 1985. Davis' anxiety is also a hefty policy position away from the perspective of the new PBS chairman Dallin Oaks. Oaks is a Mormon who abhors government "interference" in any institution.

To facilitate commercialization an "independent" lobbying group has been set up for public TV, called the Association for Public Broadcasting. One of its goals is to free federal funding from any unprofitable strings attached. Another is to encourage commercial ventures.

The planners are worrying about a real problem. Money is tight. Donations are down, inflation is up, and the legislature is not sympathetic. A common Republican sentiment, for instance, is that we no longer need a taxpayer-funded service, since the diversity of new technology will assure freedom of speech.

Although this sunny estimate may prove untrue, public TV today is a sorry case to defend. By and large, public TV stations have fulfilled the mandate to provide an alternative to commercial broadcasting so poorly—building their only sizable constituency among a group that can also be reached by commercialization—that there is little ground within the existing set-up on which to build a case for protection.

That failure goes hand in hand with the history of lukewarm federal support. "I put a lot of the blame on Congress," said

Andrew Schwartzman of the Media Access Project. "If there had been substantial funds early on, if the PBS system hadn't been decentralized, if appropriations hadn't been whittled, we would be seeing very different choices now."

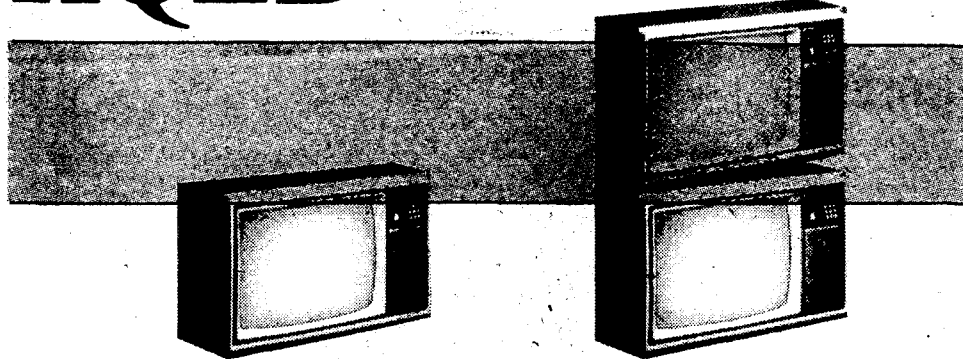
At this point, PBS execs and station managers are making a free market virtue of necessity. "I'm not sure they even want public money, if it comes with strings attached," said Paul D'Ari of the National Citizens Committee on Broadcasting. "In 1978 and 1979 they could have lobbied for alternatives—like a tax on TVs, which they have in Britain, or

for a spectrum fee, which taxes commercial broadcasters. But we didn't see them even making an effort."

"They do have a money problem and commercialization doesn't have to be a bad thing, but when you put it in the context of what they want to do with their stations you have to worry."

On one thing everyone agrees. Even the most inadequate of public stations is better than nothing. But at the moment the threat of bankruptcy is being used as the weapon to hold criticism hostage while stations transform accountable into unaccountable dollars.

## KQED



*Continued from page 5*

dollars, the news budget was cut from \$680,000 to less than \$29,000.

There is no formal mechanism to ensure that money generated by news ventures will later revert to an aspect of public TV or radio that was sacrificed in financial hard times. Monies returned frequently lodge in that comfortable line item, "general operating budget," a.k.a. overhead. At WTTW, the dividends returned by *Chicago* magazine and the for-profit classical music station WFMT go toward general operating costs.

The priorities of commercial enterprises seem to dictate priorities of the public station. As one board member of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting—the umbrella over both PBS and National Public Radio—complained: "The more they're thinking entrepreneurial, they'll choose the moneymaker every time."

The San Francisco petition does not instill confidence in KQED as an investment opportunity. One station manager poured millions of dollars into building high-quality studios that, without the money to produce programs, are being rented to commercial producers. *Focus* magazine, even with a huge budget and

additional ad revenues, is losing between a quarter and a half million dollars annually. And \$1.8 million of the station's dollars are going to open a pay-TV station that KQED has closed at least twice—in defiance of FCC rulings—for lack of funds.

Even the committee's petition to deny has been subject to the mysterious bungling surrounding KQED. Committee member Larry Hall hunted far and wide in FCC offices, looking for copies of the 1977 petition, and for follow-up correspondence that, under law, the petitioners were supposed to receive but hadn't. No luck.

"There's been a lot of interest in this case," the FCC review officer said. "Maybe that's why there are no files available." Officials said something about the FCC having a "serious records problem." Finally the files showed up in that same review officer's personal files where a secretary found them.

Other media groups are watching the San Francisco fight with interest, and taking notes. Upcoming, possibly this spring, is the next funding bill for public TV, where a lot of the arguments surfacing in the commercialization trend will emerge again. —P.A.

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NEW YORK, N.Y.

### December 27-28

Third Annual DSOC Winter Youth Conference. Join Michael Harrington, Manning Marable, Peter Steinfeld, Norman Birnbaum, Kate Ellis, Deborah Meier, and Irving

Howe to discuss "Democratic Socialist Strategy Under Reagan." At District Council 37—AFSCME, 140 Park Place (Wall St. area). Registration at 9:00 a.m. \$10.00. To register call DSOC, 853 Broadway, NY, (212) 260-3270.

### January 2

Prof. Richard Marienstras, French author and Jewish Socialist activist, will speak on "Anti-Semitism in France." The talk will be sponsored by the Jewish Socialist Youth Bund, and will take place at the NY Marxist School, 151 West 19th St., 7th floor. 7:00 p.m. There will be a suggested donation of \$1.00.

## DIRECTORY

The Directory is published to facilitate contact with organizations frequently referred to in the pages of *In These Times*. Each organization has paid a fee for its listing.

**Citizens Energy Project**  
1110 6th Street, NW, #300  
Washington, DC 20001

**The Citizens Party-National Office**  
1605 Connecticut Ave., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20009

**The Citizens Party of Illinois**  
109 N. Dearborn, Suite 603  
Chicago, IL 60602  
(312) 332-2066

**Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy**  
120 Maryland Ave., N.E.  
Washington, DC 20002

**C.O.I.N.-Consumers Opposed to Inflation in the Necessities**  
2000 P Street, N.W.  
Suite 413  
Washington, DC 20036

**DSOC-Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee**  
853 Broadway, Room 801  
New York, NY 10003

**Midwest Academy**  
600 West Fullerton Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60614

**National Center for Economic Alternatives**  
2000 P Street, N.W.  
Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036

**NAM-New American Movement**  
3244 N. Clark St.  
Chicago, IL 60657

**New Patriot Alliance**  
343 S. Dearborn, Room 305  
Chicago, IL 60604

**Partido Cubano Democratico Socialista**  
Exterior Office  
P.O. Box 350805  
Miami, FL 33135  
(305) 638-4880

**Science for the People**  
897 Main Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139

**Socialist Party**  
1011 N. 3rd St., No. 201  
Milwaukee, WI 53203

**Working Women**  
1224 Huron Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44115



## MUSIC

## Record rack picks

By Rick Ridder

*Commercial success in the music business may be its own reward, but it creates a problem for the Christmas shopper. Buy your friends one of the top albums of the year and chances are good that they either own it already or will find a duplicate under the tree. To cut down traffic in post-Christmas exchange lines, I suggest these excellent 1980 releases that did not necessarily make it onto the charts or into the bins at K-mart.*

**On/Off Broadway-USA**  
(Atlantic Records)

As one promo man said, "I can't understand why this band didn't sell. It has good lyrics and good hooks." And for once this

wasn't just record company hype. This is a listenable light rock record by some fine musicians from Chicago.

**Crawfish Fiesta/Professor Longhair** (Alligator Records)

Henry Roeland Byrd, a.k.a. Professor Longhair, died shortly after the completion of this album, which leaves you wondering why the professor never received the notoriety of other New Orleans musicians for his influence on the development of rock and roll. His blend of various strains of music—blues, Cajun, R&B, jazz and even calypso—is thoroughly enjoyable. This is a great party record.

**Classic Clifton/Clifton Chenier** (Arhoolie)

"Best of" albums are generally a collection of commercial hits that fail to capture the breadth

of an artist's repertoire. But no one could call Chenier commercial, except possibly in remote areas of Louisiana. The Cajun accordionist has recorded numerous albums over the last 15 years on the Arhoolie label. The selections included here make this one of the finest examples of Cajun blues. It is an ethnomusicologist's nirvana and the average listener's delight.

**Amtrak Blues/Alberta Hunter** (Columbia)

At 85, she keeps on singing while John Hammond keeps on producing—one of the best female blues/jazz albums in a couple of years.

**Robin Lane & the Chartbusters/Robin Lane & the Chartbusters** (Warner Brothers)

The debut album of this band reminds me of some of the more tasteful late '60s high-energy rock albums. The band has the power of New Wave and the control of good rock and roll.

**Hard Times/Lacey J. Dalton** (Columbia)

If this woman can somehow get away from Nashville produc-

ers she's going to be amazing. Despite the overproduction of her album, this former rock and roller handles country blues with deftness. Some call her a country Janis Joplin; she was named "New Artist of the Year" by the Country Music Association.

**Musical Shapes/Carlene Carter** (Warner Brothers)

Here is a woman who left Nashville for London to record her latest album. The move seems to have been beneficial. Clean production by husband/

*Jazz singer Alberta Hunter is going strong at 85.*



producer Nick Lowe has allowed this Carter family member to highlight her powerful voice. One of the year's best country albums. **Mar West/The Tony Rice Unit** (Rounder Records)

For that Sunday morning with the newspaper, this is the record. Tony Rice's contributions to the jazz/bluegrass genre tend to be lighter in spirit and less intense than David Grisman's compositions.

**Humans/Bruce Cockburn** (Millennium Records)

This Canadian folk singer has a somewhat apocalyptic view of the world. He has not gained as much popularity in the U.S. as could be expected from his fascinating lyrics and equally strong voice and musicianship.

**Illusions/Arthur Blyth** (Columbia)

Blyth is at the forefront of the avant-garde jazz movement, but this is one of his more accessible albums to date. Worth a listen and a purchase, particularly if you want to find out what is going on in jazz today.

*Rick Ridder works in radio.*

## CLASSIFIED

## PUBLICATIONS

49 BIBLICAL CONTRADICTIONS. \$3.00, free sample. Discovery, Box 20331-ITT, WVC, Utah 84120.

"THE NEW RESOURCE WARS"—Series on native peoples and natural resources. Examines struggles in the Amazon, southwest U.S., Great Lakes region. \$3 from CALA, 731 State St., Madison, WI 53703.

SUCCESS KILLS PRIVATE ENTERPRISE. Copies \$1.00. Rips Box 341164-IT, Coral Gables, FL 33114.

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INDUSTRIAL WORKER—The union paper dedicated to class struggle. \$4/yr. 3435 N. Sheffield, #202, Chicago, IL 60657.

BULLETIN OF CONCERNED ASIAN SCHOLARS: Vol. 12 #3: Philippines special, plus "Japanese Working Class." No. 4: Japanese Biological Warfare and U.S. cover-up. Four essays on Kampuchea-Vietnam-China. Copy \$4; Sub. \$4 BCAS. Box W, Charlemont, MA 01339.

MARX AND HISTORY, an introductory book by Ross Gandy. University of Texas Press. Austin 78712. \$14.95.

THE WITNESS—an independent monthly journal addressing social issues from a Christian perspective, offers readers of In These Times a complimentary four-month subscription. If you would like to get the next four issues free of charge, please write to The Witness, Box 359, Ambler, PA 19002.

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## HELP WANTED

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St., Milwaukee, WI 53208. Deadline Dec. 20, 1980.

PROJECT COORDINATOR, OUT-REACH DIRECTOR & EDITOR needed for national anti-nuclear clearing-house. Anti-nuclear expertise, writing & organizational skills essential. Send resume and writing sample to Nuclear Information & Resource Service, 1536 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036. Deadline: Jan. 1.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: under supervision run office, follow union democracy cases, maintain contact with unionists, lawyers, respond to inquiries. Must type, keep accurate records, willing to share all the grubby stuff required to run organization. \$1,000 per month. Resumes only.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. Non-profit, public interest research / activist group has opening for director. Organizational and fundraising skills a must. \$10,000 plus benefits. Send resume to Public Interest Research Group in Michigan, 590 Hollister Building, Lansing, MI 48933, c/o Hiring Committee.

COORDINATOR for Revolving Loan Fund. The Industrial Cooperative Association (ICA) is seeking a senior staff person to research, develop and coordinate a revolving high risk-capital loan fund for worker cooperatives. MBA or work equivalent with experience in financial management, fundraising or marketing required. Previous experience with cooperatives and commitment to workplace democracy preferred. Applications from third world candidates and women encouraged. Salary range is between \$15,000 and \$18,000, depending upon qualifications. Please send letter of application and

resume by Feb. 15 to: The Industrial Cooperative Association, 249 Elm St., Somerville, MA 02144.

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## T-SHIRTS

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FRANCIS PINING in hipeoisieland for your class analysis. Love, St. Ethel-Betty.

## ORGANIZATIONS

TEACHERS & OTHER EDUCATION WORKERS: investigate a different concept of unionism that can move the AFT/NEA/AAUP to greater militancy. Write Industrial Union Caucus in Education, Box 1564, Grand Rapids, MI 49501.

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# Four

## Gang of

被告姚文元在被告席上。

Yao Wenyuan

Zhan Chunquiao

被告江青在被告席上。

Huang Yongsheng

被告吴法宪在被告席上。

Wu Faxian

被告王洪文在被告席上。

被告邱会作在被告席上。

## Chinese

## Docudrama

drama in which two little boys were throwing a frisbee (there's now a frisbee factory here). Other students began arriving in twos and threes, asking in Chinese, English, French, Italian: "Is it true? Is the trial on?"

At 8:30 the program in progress switched off and the seal of state filled the screen with red. As the camera panned the spectators in the small courtroom, Chinese students murmured names in recognition. The camera focused on the title cards "Judge," "Assistant Judge," and the big white covered tea mugs placed before each one. Someone joked nervously, "Can't they do anything without tea?"

As the judge read each defendant's name and the defendants were brought into the courtroom the watching students made little gasps of recognition. "Thinner." "Look how old." When Wang Hung-wen entered, my friend said, "When he was going to be Chairman he had lots of photos made. He used to be quite handsome, now look at him."

Finally the judge called for Jiang Qing. "She's wearing her wig." "Look, what spirit." And one loud "Hah!" of satisfaction. In one movement we all dragged our stools forward, closer to the TV. The room was now packed. Jiang took her seat and put on her earphones. "Look at the pen in her pocket." The judge began reading the charges and we leaned forward. Suddenly the screen turned blue and the TV drama returned to the screen just where it had left off, with an old woman's foot on the stair. She was wearing cotton cloth shoes.

Last weekend a poster appeared on a wall around the corner from "Democracy Wall" that proclaimed in huge characters, "If you try the Gang of Four then try Hua Guo-feng too." Hua succeeded Mao as party chairman in late 1976, but before he took on his new job he headed the bureau of internal security. People seem to remember his role in the Tien An Men Square incident in early 1976 when hundreds were arrested for rallying in

mourning after Zhou En-Lai's death. The painted characters disappeared by Sunday evening. What seems significant is that even those who dare to face into the political wind with a contrary opinion don't disagree with the necessity of a trial for the Four.

On the contrary, most Chinese I have talked to think the trial is a great triumph for the socialist legal system. In political study sessions, which are held more or less regularly on Thursday afternoons, working groups discussed the principle that all people, those above and those below, will in the future be subject to the law. There does appear to be a genuine desire for change, for guarantees of due process, for something to rely on besides one's connections.

Then again, many Chinese have said that people are interested in the trial only out of curiosity. As one friend wryly put it, using a customary greeting when he saw the Gang of Four on TV, "We haven't seen each other for a long time." People are curious too about how fiercely the defendants will protest. Beijing gossip has it that the scene we watched later of Jiang Qing being handed her charges was the fourth take. The other three were not used because she argued with the judges and questioned the legitimacy of the court. More serious objections have

come up since that first Thursday night broadcast.

Watching the questioning of Yao Wenyuan (one of the Four) last night, one Chinese friend said as soon as Yao began to answer a question and explain his actions the prosecution shouted another question. "Did you write this? Yes, I did. Did you go to Shanghai? Yes, I went." Yao had no time to explain why he did these things, the friend complained. He said many people at first optimistic about the handling of the trial are now dissatisfied with the actual trial procedure. They want to know if this is really the way "law" will be carried out.

When I have pointed out the difficulty of the Four receiving a fair trial, people cheerfully agree, "Of course it's not fair" and just as cheerfully continue, "but the Four are guilty and hateful." The guilt of the Four appears to be a foregone conclusion here, but the trial goes on and, compared with such proceedings in the past, it is remarkably public. Optimists in the foreign community say that in this case function will perhaps follow form. Pessimists say that malcontents will learn good lessons from the broadcasts.

The day after the first broadcast, a series of ten individual photos of the defendants on trial appeared in the *People's Daily*, the official Party organ. The Four were featured on the front page surrounded by a drawing of manacles and chain. In the *Beijing Daily*, the more independent city paper, the Jiang Qing/Lin Biao anti-revolutionary clique appeared on the back page next to a quarter-page ad for Datsun and above two articles on Taiwan. And that's a very interesting verdict in itself.

J.C. Rose studies Chinese history at Beijing University.

By J.C. Rose

BEIJING, CHINA

IT WAS A QUIET THURSDAY EVENING in the foreign students' dorm at Beijing University. Most of the students had gone to see a movie. At 8:20 a Chinese friend and I were deep in a discussion of the upcoming student election when someone knocked at the door.

"The trial of the Gang of Four will be on at 8:30."

Figuring that the common room on the second floor would be crowded, I grabbed my keys, rushed out the door and down the concrete stairs. There was only one woman there.

"Is it true? Will the Gang of Four be on TV?"

"Yes. My roommate got a phone call from relatives in the city."

We pulled up stools and watched a TV